

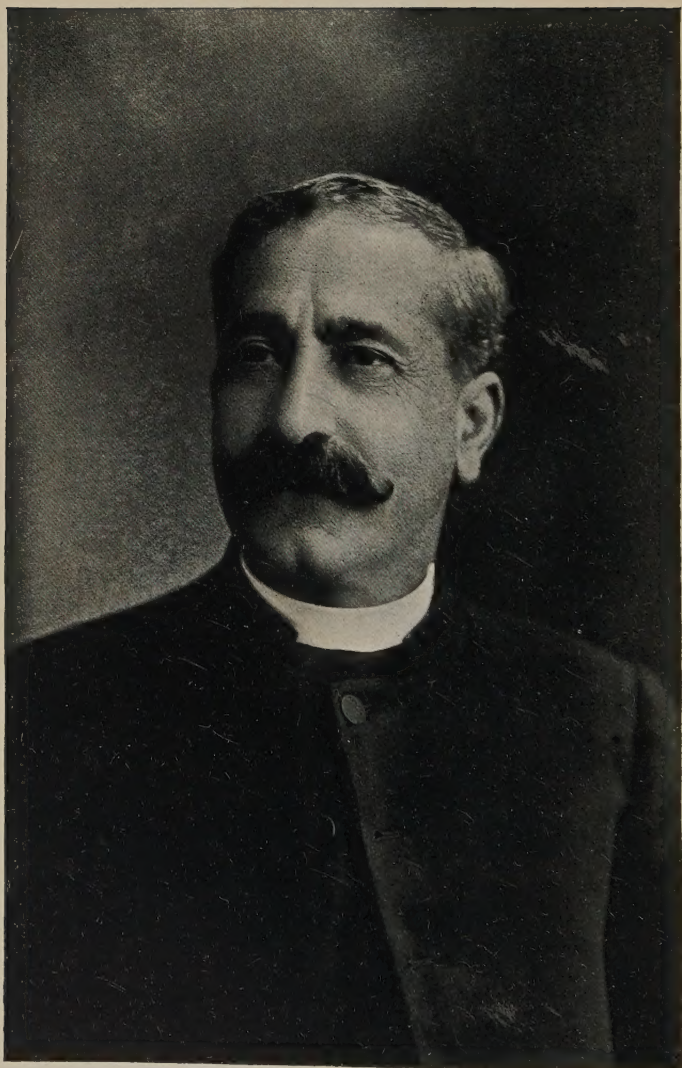


**NEW TESTAMENT ARCHÆOLOGY**  
**DISCOVERIES FROM THE NILE TO THE TIBER**









REV. J. POLITEYAN.



NEW TESTAMENT  
ARCHÆOLOGY  
DISCOVERIES FROM THE NILE  
TO THE TIBER

BY THE REV.

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WITH FOREWORD BY THE VERY REVEREND  
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DEAN OF CANTERBURY

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TO MY WIFE

who rendered invaluable help in  
compilation of this work

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## FOREWORD

**I**T is a conspicuous characteristic of the Bible, that it is in contact with human history and human life from the very commencement down to the Christian era. Dean Milman, justly observes at the outset of his history of the Jews, that the history of this race "leads us through every gradation of Society, and brings us into contact with almost every nation which commands our interest in the Ancient World: the migratory pastoral population of Asia, Egypt, the mysterious parent of Arts, Science, and Legislation: the Arabian Desert; the Hebrew Theocracy under the form of a federative agricultural republic; their kingdom powerful in war and splendid in peace: Babylon in its magnificence and downfall; Grecian arts and luxury endeavouring to force an unnatural refinement within the pale of the rigid Mosaic institutions: Roman arms waging an exterminating war with the independence even of the smallest states; it descends at length to all the changes in the social state of the modern European and Asiatic nations." Until the Assyrian and Babylonian discoveries of the last century, simple readers of the Book of Genesis were more in contact with the early history of mankind than Scholars in general.

There is one thread of interest throughout this long history which unites all the various narratives, and that is the revelation of God to mankind and His gradual education of them. But it ought to be more generally recognized that it is a further and peculiar characteristic of this universal religious history, that it is, for the most part, not written after the events, but that essential elements of the successive narratives are contemporary with them. The first few chapters of Genesis are, of course, exceptions. But from the time of Noah and onwards, there are indications that we have fragments of contemporary documents, as, for instance, in the 14th chapter of Genesis, in the account of the conflict between Abraham and the Canaanitish kings. The main critical question in fact, respecting the rest of the book of Genesis and the succeeding books of the Pentateuch is, whether they contain narratives which are substantially contemporary. Now a question of this sort depends in the main on the evidence of the language, and on the congruity which prevails between the narrative and the archaeological customs which can



be shown from other sources to have prevailed. In a parallel volume the author of this book has shown, with singular simplicity and completeness, the extraordinary congruity between the customs and the languages of ancient life and those of the Hebrew books. It is becoming more and more evident, that the Jewish history cannot have been written by authorities who lived long after its events ; and that the acts and words of God described in those books must be taken as substantially contemporary records of God's dealing with His people.

A very similar case exists respecting the New Testament. The main contention of hostile critics respecting that Testament has been that neither the Gospels, nor the Acts of the Apostles, nor the Epistles as they stand, can be regarded as contemporary with the events and the teaching which they relate. Now it adds immensely to the evidence against this supposition if it can be shown that the language of the New Testament writings strictly conforms with the language which we know to have been used at that particular time, and that the habits and usages of the actors in the narratives correspond generally with the ordinary customs of that day. A comparison between the two has been made possible by a mass of discoveries in Egypt and Palestine, exhibiting private letters, bills and literary remains, which reveal unconsciously the nature of daily intercourse in families, and which enable us to interpret the meaning of some social phrases and acts of St. Paul and the other Apostles. These help us to realise that the Spirit of God was working amidst the ordinary circumstances of human life, and that it is that daily life which the Gospel illuminates.

If, in a word, the Gospels and Epistles had been introduced, as it were, from above, holding a place superior to ordinary human experience, their messages might have seemed too high for us. But as we follow the Author of this book while he leads us, in a deeply interesting manner, through the various scenes of the Gospels, and of the travels of the Apostles, we shall be convinced that these narratives are not imaginative fables, but records of sober and Divine Truth.

H. WACE,

July, 1922.

The Deanery, Canterbury.

## PREFACE

THE substance of the following chapters was originally contained in a course of lectures given at Swanwick in 1916, during the annual Summer School of the Church Missions to Jews. At the unanimous request of the clergy and laity attending the school, it was decided to publish the lectures immediately; this design, however, had to be postponed on account of the War, and meanwhile, the lectures have been repeated in many parts of England, with additional notes.

From the nature of the subject we have been compelled to consult and make liberal use of many books, and to the authors of these we tender our grateful thanks and acknowledgments. Our very sincere thanks are due to the Reverend Alfred Young, D.Sc., who has been kind enough to read through the whole of the proof, and to the Very Reverend Henry Wace, Dean of Canterbury, who has honoured us by writing a foreword.

We have to acknowledge permission to reproduce illustrations, granted by the Royal Geographical Society, the Egyptian Exploration Society, the Church Missions to Jews, Mr. A. Wood, and Dr. E. W. G. Masterman.

In the following chapters it has been our endeavour to give a very brief and condensed account of Archæology and contemporary history, of New Testament times by the aid of which, many inspired pages of the New Testament can be elucidated. It is devoutly hoped that many readers will be stimulated to pursue further this fascinating subject, and to appreciate in greater measure the glory of the Divine library; with this thought in view, we have appended at the end of each chapter a list of books dealing with the subject; while we recommend these works, we, of course, undertake no responsibility for the views therein expressed.

J. POLITEYAN.

FERNCLIFFE, REDHILL, Surrey.  
July, 1922.

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# NEW TESTAMENT ARCHÆOLOGY

DISCOVERIES FROM THE NILE TO THE TIBER

## Prologue

**K**'HALEEF IBRAHAM was the chieftain of a tribe of Bedouin, who, not many years ago, were living in the neighbourhood of Damascus; he was celebrated as the owner of pure bred K'harlet horses, the best of all Arab steeds.

The hospitality of his black tent, situated in a beautiful oasis, was well known to many travellers. The Sheik's tent, though commodious according to his rank, was, after the fashion of nomadic life, innocent of all furniture, such as is known in the West. No tables, chairs, etc., but only primitive cooking and household utensils. No ornament beyond firearms, with the exception of a portrait of a Western Prince Royal.

Though Ibrahim was proud of his K'harlet horses, he was even still more so of the portrait. He would relate the story often, stroking his long pepper and salt beard, of the visit of this Prince, and the gift of his portrait which

was a token both of friendship and esteem. The strange things about the portrait were its frame—a simple rustic one, improvised by Ibrahim—and the position in which it was hung ! It would offend most certainly the aesthetic taste of any Western visitor, and probably excite his criticism.

Once a traveller gently suggested that its appearance would be greatly enhanced if it were hung according to Western ideas ; the chief at once in a tone of utter dissent, ejaculated “ ‘ Masha allah ’ (by God’s decree) it looks beautiful as it is ! ”

The above little story serves as a parable—The Holy Bible is as a portrait of Divine love and purpose embodied in Christ the Prince of Peace. Though written at sundry times, and in divers manners, Christ is the central figure throughout. The Book is not a speculation of the human mind, but a Divine revelation given by inspiration ; it is presented in an Oriental frame, cast in Oriental moulds of thought, and interwoven with the simple life of the East. It is perfectly obvious that to appreciate its beauty to the fullest degree, it must be studied in the light of the Near East, in its language, and social and religious life, etc., etc., and we must not only go to the East of to-day, but to the very East of the days of our Saviour and His Apostles.

It is true that the East is very conservative, that its manners and customs persist long.

A papyrus of 4,000 years ago, gives the picture of two oxen drawing a wooden plough, guided by a man, behind whom is walking another man with a pouch at his side, from which he scatters the seed with his hand. This was 4,000 years ago ; the same sight can be seen to-day.

Change in the East is almost imperceptible ; some might say there *is* no change. Scientists thought there was no change in radium, but it has been proved that if one could watch it for 2,600 years, a great change would be perceived ; and it is so with the East, although change has been so gradual that it has passed unnoticed, yet careful observers know that it has changed since the time of our Saviour and His Apostles. No doubt now, under present day conditions, changes will occur much more rapidly.

Let us suppose that a Jew who lived in Palestine 2,000 years ago revisited his home just before the Great War, would he have found any difference in the life of his country ? No doubt many familiar scenes would be the same, the Bethlehemite shepherd would still be leading his flock where Solomon's gardens used to be, and playing on his neige (reed pipe). Two country women would still be grinding their corn early in the morning, singing as they ground, while their little ones were sleeping, " Nami ya eni, nome il hinna " (sleep beloved, sleep in peace). He would be a little puzzled at the song, for though the singing is as usual in a minor key, yet the song is in language unknown to him, neither Aramaic nor Greek.



He would find himself still in the land of spirits and ghosts, still a Saul in his perplexity resorting to a familiar spirit who see genii (gods) arise out of the earth, the only difference being that they were not clad as Samuel of old, but in the garb of an orthodox Turk with green mantle and turban.

His suspicions being aroused by these little differences of language and garb, he would look out eagerly on the Eastern side of Jordan, away to the up-land valleys. Where are the park-like forests? Where are the boundless corn and pasture lands? Turning to the Western side he eagerly would search for the terraced hills covered with olives and vines. Ah! where are those delicious glens in which living waters murmured? Where is the busy life and the fairy-like beauty round the Lake of Galilee? Those green pastures of spring tide full of flocks; and the cattle on the thousand hills? Alas, they are all vanished, only grey hills and neglected valleys! blighted under various Gentile powers, and lastly under that of the unspeakable Ottoman Turk. Saddened, he betakes himself to the Holy City, and mixes with the motley crowd. Again where are the Roman Legionaries? and Temple Guards? here are only strangers whom he has never seen before. Where are the proud Pharisees with their broad phylacteries, daring and turbulent? here are only a few brow beaten, dispirited Jews cringing to the Gentiles!

The Roman and Herodian crowds have given place in

turn to the Byzantines, Saracens, Crusaders, Turks and Franks.

More than saddened, he would at last betake himself for comfort and consolation, to the Temple. Where is that beautiful white marble edifice, shining in immaculate purity in the glory of the morning sun? He sees only a strange building with a dome, surrounded with coloured tiles, and with mysterious bands of Arabic inscriptions which he cannot read. Dismayed, he still waits to see whether he can hear the trumpet announcing the commencement of the feast, the Levite chanting the Hallel to the accompanying music of a single flute, the choir of Levite children, with their treble voices singing, "Praise the Lord for He is good and His mercy endureth for ever." But horrors! instead of the Levite he sees a Muezzin (Turkish priest) ascending the Minaret, and hears him shout discordantly in a strange language, the following words "Allah hu akbar eshhadu enno la illaha ill—Allah wa Muhammed rasoul Allah" (I witness that God is great and that God is the only God and Muhammed His prophet). At the last words he fairly faints. Then he hears the shrill whistle of a locomotive at Jerusalem station, and the throb of an aeroplane overhead.

This is the last straw, the ancient Jew hurries away with all speed to his resting place, not even stopping to shake off the dust from his feet. Alas, change is our portion here, even Palestine is not proof against it!

The teaching of the Gospel was enshrined in the life, customs, and habits of the towns and villages of Palestine ; the contents of the other portion of the New Testament, such as the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, are interwoven with the life of other countries than Palestine ; hence the New Testament must be studied in the light of the life of these countries also, and our field of enquiry should extend from the Nile to the Tiber.

In order to understand the writings of St. Paul, we must not only see him in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel, but study him in the city of his boyhood, and note to what influences his early life was subject in Tarsus. We must pass by the present dingy town of the Syrian Antioch and visualize the Antioch of ancient days, which was called " the beautiful," the home of the Gentile church, where it first received its name of " Christian." To this end we must conjure up the old world. We must find the magician's wand to bring it to life again. We think Providence has placed that wand in our hand in the science of Archæology.

Archæology is the science or knowledge of ancient things, nations, cities, languages, etc., which have been buried in oblivion for centuries, until resuscitated by its magic wand ! We do not claim that Archæology at the present time restores to us the whole of the East of Bible times, for it is a young science, and has been greatly hampered by Turkish prejudice and misrule, but its discoveries

hitherto are of immense value, and now that much of the land has been freed from the Turkish yoke, greater facilities will be afforded to Archæological explorers.

For hundreds of years the great city of Ephesus has been lost to the world, but to-day, Archæology has made it stand before us with its Temple, theatre, and literature, speaking to us of its ancient glory. In parts of Egypt, Archæology has unearthed in the papyri a whole mass of Jewish Apocalyptic writings, and much ancient literature, which reveal to us the everyday life and customs of the common people, both of which form a background to a large portion of the New Testament. Indeed, a great part of the ancient East has been resuscitated—each stone a sermon, each mountain an echo, each stream a song, each city a history, proving for ever the faithfulness of the record of Holy Writ.

We venture to think that the Church of Christ is under a great obligation to the band of most devoted students of Archæology, whose self-sacrificing strenuous labours have produced one of the finest commentaries on the New Testament. Their discoveries have illuminated numberless pages of the Gospels and Epistles, confirmed many sacred statements, and rectified many wrong opinions of the Word of God.

Sir William Ramsay, in his latest book, gives a brief summary of his earlier life and tells us how “the Tubingen School (the most destructive German critical school) was

my guide in criticism : the logical skill with which Bauer and his associates carried out their premises to their foregone conclusion, had impressed me deeply. . . I worshipped Wellhausen (a leading German Higher Critic) . . . a stroke of fate fell ! I was ordered by a Doctor to go abroad, and wandered for a year reading nothing, but keeping my ears, eyes, and mind, open in the open-air. In early May, 1880, we landed in Smyrna, in 1881 ventured into Phrygia, and the cities of Asia Minor : this was the way that brought me to the study of Luke and Paul, and the New Testament generally, when I found that prepossessions and pre-formed opinions were wrong : discovery of new evidence partly by others, and partly by myself, changed the judgment and formed opinions of one who had aimed at Truth, and lived for Truth."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The bearing of recent discovery on the trustworthiness of the N.T. Intro. 2. pp. : 16, 17, 19, 25, 31.



## CHAPTER I

### Writing Materials

**A**MONGST the many writing materials used 2,000 years ago were the wooden tablets called "Charektires," these were covered with wax upon which one wrote with a pointed instrument of iron or bone, thus engraving the letters on the wax. One end of the "pen" was flat and used to smooth the wax over again for further use, as we efface writing from a slate. One hundred and twenty six such tablets have been found in Pompeii, the property of a Baker, dating B.C. 54. Every stroke made upon these tablets is perfectly distinct to-day. These waxed tablets were greatly used for contracts, bonds, receipts and memoranda, and probably it was for one of these that Zacharias asked.<sup>1</sup>

Another material in use in very ancient times, and dating as far back as the Egyptian King Asa, about B.C. 3580, was Papyri.<sup>2</sup> This material is referred to by Job and Isaiah.<sup>3</sup> Papyrus, from which our word "paper" comes, was made of the pith of a plant which grew in the marshes of the Nile. It was amongst these reeds that the little ark con-

<sup>1</sup> Luke i., 63.    <sup>2</sup> Kenyon "Paleography of Greek Papyri, p. 14."

<sup>3</sup> Job viii., 2; Isa. xviii., 2.

taining Moses was placed. It was a very durable material when kept in a dry atmosphere. Almost all the papyri so far discovered comes from Upper Egypt, preserved in its dry sandy soil, which is free from microbes, unlike that of other parts of the world. Papyri used for correspondence was cut to the required size,  $5 \times 10$  inches. It was a most convenient production for the purpose, being of very light weight. These papyri letters were carried by a class of men called "Tabulari," who continually travelled from town to town and from village to village.

Cicero could be in continuous correspondence with his friends at Athens, and St. Paul keep in touch with the Churches and individual believers scattered all over the Roman world.

Papyri were written upon with ink and a reed pen. Some inscriptions of Ahab's time have been found in Samaria written in ink, which are still fresh and legible. A great drawback of the papyri was its price—it was sold at 6d. per sheet: this led to the economical practice of washing off the old writing for the purpose of re-use.

Perhaps it was to this custom St. Paul refers in Colossians "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us."<sup>1</sup>

Papyri was sometimes used for books, which were in the shape of rolls. One roll discovered in Egypt was 42 yards long. If St. John's Gospel were written on a papyri roll,

<sup>1</sup> Col. ii., 14.

it would make a roll 25 feet in length. This form of book was most inconvenient for reference, for it often meant the unrolling of the whole roll to find the required quotation—this led to discrepancy in quotations. A cheaper material called Ostraca (or pottery) was used extensively by the poorer classes. This was unglazed and took ink writing well—if the housewife wanted to send a note to a friend, she would use one of these fragments. They were also used for bills, receipts or ordinary memoranda. The discovery of these Ostraka gives us an insight into the daily life and doings of the poor ; hitherto we had only known that of the upper classes, shown in the literature of the time. Such a discovery is of great importance to the study of the New Testament, as it was mostly among the poor that the Gospel was first preached.

Another material was brought into use by the keen literary competition between Pergamos and Egypt. The Ptolemies of Egypt were jealous of the literary rivalry of Pergamos, and cut off the supply of the Egyptian produced papyri. This led the King of Pergamos, Eumenes II., to the happy discovery and manufacture of Parchment or Pergamene : as doubtless is well known parchment is made of the prepared skins of animals. It could therefore be, unlike the papyri, procured anywhere, and was much more durable : ultimately it obtained the supremacy for all literary purposes. The Jews and early Christians adopted it for their books (rolls). The two oldest manu-

scripts of the Greek Bible, the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus were of this material, as was also the book which St. Paul left behind at Troas.<sup>1</sup>

At Nazareth, our Saviour went into the Synagogue and read a portion out of one of these rolls. As a rule only one side of these rolls was written upon, but sometimes both sides were used. If so the Greeks termed it "Opisthographos," i.e., "a full book," no room for additions or notes. This kind of book is called in the Revelation, "a book written within and on the backside" or as some aptly say "Codex fatidicus"<sup>2</sup> (the roll of the counsel of God overflowing) the cup of God's revelation brimful and running over! Some of these rolls were authenticated by being bound with thread and sealed seven times, and were laid in a chest or ark. The roll in Rev. v., is spoken of as sealed, representing God's counsel and revelation, authenticated and sealed by God Himself. St. John sees no one in earth or heaven equal to the task of undoing the seal; only the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah," "the Lamb as it had been slain" was able to unseal the roll, and unfold God's plan of salvation. It was left to the crucified Christ to unfold and reveal. He was the highest revealer or exegesis of God. All through His earthly life He was revealing God's great purpose, "We have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ii Tim., iv., 18.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. v., 1.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iv., 6.

Sometimes people wonder why we have no manuscripts of the Bible earlier than the 4th and 5th centuries. One of the reasons might be the Jewish custom of burying their sacred parchments when they became old and worn, from a sense of reverence. Future discoveries may unearth some of these valuable documents. Another reason may be that the Gospels and Epistles were written originally on the less expensive materials, and being continually sent from one place to another, as in the case of St. Paul's Epistles, perished in the process.

Interest in literature was general, attendance at lectures fashionable, even women are mentioned as readers and critics. There were schools and endowment for education, and the famous universities of Athens, Alexandria, Tarsus, etc. The lower classes knew how to read and write. There was even the use of shorthand—Cicero employed it in the Trial of Catiline, and it was much in vogue in the 1st Century A.D.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Salmon considers that some recently discovered sayings of Jesus, denominated as Q by scholars, were written down in shorthand notes during our Lord's life.<sup>2</sup> Two thousand years ago was a literary age. There were libraries at Pergamos, Alexandria, and other towns, and the practice of letter writing was in full swing.

Hilarian, an Egyptian labourer, could write a letter to

<sup>1</sup> " Luke the Historian " Robertson, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> " The Human Element in the Gospels," p. 274.



his wife Alice, dated equivalent to our 17th June, near the time of the birth of Christ :—his letter is in the possession of the Egyptian Exploration Society.<sup>1</sup> An Egyptian soldier, in the Roman army in the 2nd Century A.D., wrote from Fayum in Egypt to his father. His letter is in the Berlin Museum. It might well have been written by one of our own soldiers at the present time. We will take a few lines from it—" Appian to his father and lord many greetings. Before all things I pray that thou art in health and that thou dost prosper. I thank god Serapis for help in the storm at sea. My lord father write soon, firstly of thy health, and of my sister and brother. I kiss thy hand because thou hast taught me well, and therefore I hope to advance quickly. I send a little picture of me. Salute Capito much, salute my sister and brother, Seramla and my friends."

The above letters are very similar in style to those of St. John and St. Paul. Beginning with the cordial enquiry for the health and well being of the recipients, and always ending with salutations to friends and acquaintances. One letter found contained thirty-one lines, thirteen of which were taken up with salutations. Besides the similarity in style, there is also one in certain expressions as— In the labourer's letter he calls his wife " My sister." St. Paul says, " Have we not power to lead about a sister " (wife) ? To address a wife as a sister was a polite mode of

<sup>1</sup> Granfill & Hunt Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4.

expression. In a letter from a boy to his father, the boy, somewhat annoyed at the nonfulfilment of his father's promise to take him to town, uses two expressions common in the New Testament. He calls the gift his father gave him " husks " (figuratively used for " rubbish " or worthless things). The Prodigal son who once had the full title to his father's wealth, was now reduced to " husks," i.e., refuse, fit only for swine. The naughty boy vows he will not eat or drink until his father takes him to the town ; this phrase is used figuratively to show his stern resolution. The same expression is found in connection with St. Paul.<sup>1</sup> " Certain of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul." One man in the year A.D. 22, writing to a friend says, " I am not ' anointing ' myself until I hear from you." This is figurative of a state of gloominess and sadness. Our Saviour thus describes the Pharisees who went about gloomily with a sad countenance. He tells His disciples to anoint their heads, i.e., to be cheerful and happy.<sup>2</sup>

### THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

We read in Genesis that the confusion of tongues led to the dispersion of the human race. Language has been a great factor in the unity or division of nations. Hundreds of years before the Christian era, the little country

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxiii., 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi., 16.

of Greece was divided into small Commonwealths, continually at war with each other. There were as many dialects as there were cities, and this tended to prevent the unity of the nation. Athens and Thebes were scarcely 40 miles apart, but each regarded the other as a barbarian and an outcast ; while one reached the high water mark of culture, the other remained at the ebb. Philip of Macedon saw that if Sparta and Thebes were to be welded together for their mutual welfare, there must be a common dialect. So the process of fusion of the various dialects began. First the Ionic, then the Doric gave way to the Attic of Athens. The issue of this union was a common Greek dialect called by grammarians ' *He koine dialectos*,' and this became the medium of everyday intercourse, commerce, and so forth. When Alexander the Great, later on, conceived the idea of a universal Greek Empire, he was confronted with the problem of how to weld the different races of the East and the West into one great Empire. Where could he find the secret of cementing them together ? He, too, realized that a common language was the best bond for a world empire. As he marched forth towards the East to realize his ambition, he took with him, not only his Greek army, but his Greek language, which he and his successors did their utmost to promote amongst the nations they conquered. So that, by the beginning of the Christian era, Greek had become the language of the known world.



Amman from the Citadel. Græco-Roman Temple on Hillside.

*By permission of Dr. E. W. G. Maesterman.*





Greek was the language of the imperial city of Rome, Marcus Aurelius wrote his meditations in Greek. The liturgy of the Church of Rome for the first two centuries was in Greek. In Egypt about a million Jews knew nothing but Greek, so the Old Testament had to be translated into Greek for their benefit. In Palestine, Herod became the patron of Greek learning, he was surrounded with a galaxy of Greek teachers. Gamaliel II., the grandson of the great Gamaliel at whose feet St. Paul had sat, was busying himself with Greek learning. Askelon produced four epicurean philosophers. Authocus, Sosus, Antibius, and Eubius. Gadara produced Theodorus, the tutor of Tiberius.

Greek inscriptions have been found in all countries which were under the Roman rule, from the Nile to the Tiber, and even in Persia, two title deeds of a vineyard, B.C. 88 and 22, have been brought to light. So we see Greek was practically a universal language.

Alexander the Great little knew he was preparing the world not only for a Grecian Empire, but also for the reception of the Gospel of Christ, when he caused his language to be the principal medium of intercourse.

This was one of the chief reasons of the rapid spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire. There was no need for the first Missionaries of the Cross to learn the language of the various races to which they went, as present day Missionaries have to do, for they were able everywhere to straightway preach the Gospel of Christ.

When the teachings and doings of our Divine Saviour and His Apostles had to be recorded in writing, a departure was made from the common literary practice of the time. Whilst "He Koine," in Prayer Book parlance, "the vulgar tongue," was used in conversation, in commerce, and everyday intercourse, for literary purposes another form of Greek was employed termed "Attic," or classical Greek. The same rule still obtains to-day in Palestine and Turkey—there is a great difference between the common conversational and commercial language, and that used for literary purposes. There was a great difference between the two forms of Greek; whilst the former could be understood by all, the latter could only be by the educated classes.

In comparing these two forms the late Dr. Moulton speaks of the "Attic" as "Greek in its best clothes," whilst "He Koine is Greek in corduroys." He further illustrates this difference by referring to Macaulay's essays on Johnson's English when he used it in his literary work, and when he used it in ordinary conversation as follows: Classic style—"There emerged from the chamber in which we were to repose, a man as black as Cyclops from the forge." Common style—"When we got in, a dirty fellow jumped up from a bed in which we were to lie."<sup>1</sup>

Two thousand years ago no author would have considered it correct to write a book excepting in literary

<sup>1</sup> From Egyptian Rubbish Heaps. p. 25.

Greek. In New Testament times Polybius, Plutarch, and Lucian, each wrote in it : and even Jewish writers of that period, as Josephus and Philo, did not deign to use the vernacular of the day. Though Attic Greek must be limited in its appeal to a section only of the populace, yet naturally there was the temptation to a writer to adhere to the literary custom of his times.

When the Apostles came to pen the message of the Gospel, no doubt they realised that they had a subject which was quite different from the topics of all other writers. They were not mere Authors, they were the Ambassadors of a King, with glad tidings for all mankind, for rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, educated and uneducated. Had these Jewish Messengers written in the home language of the Jew, "Aramaic," it would only have appealed to, or have been understood, by the few ! Had they written in the literary style it would have appealed only to men of letters. But they put the universal message in the universal language "Koine," a language plain and unadorned, a language of daily life, the language of the people ; and why ? because the New Testament was intended to be the Book for the people. As we have already seen, classical Greek was preserved to us in the writings of men of letters, but no books have come down to us in the language of the New Testament, as that form of Greek was not used by literary writers. In the course of time this Greek dialect, "Koine," was merged in Byzantine

Greek, and again later in Modern Greek, so that the "Koine" of our Saviour's day became a lost dialect.

Until recently Commentators have had to expound the New Testament in the light of classical, and even modern Greek. This was only partially successful, because the real key to New Testament Greek was the knowledge of "Koine" and no trace of this was to be found. Now in the providence of God, Archæology discovers the language of the people, not in books, but in thousands of documents such as letters, bills, receipts, deeds, contracts, written on tablets, papyri, and potsherds. This discovery has placed in our hands the right key for opening the exact meaning of many New Testament words.

Our future Commentators, with the aid of these documents, will be able to produce increasingly helpful expositions of the New Testament.

#### ASSURANCE.

To illustrate this, we will just take a few New Testament words, looking upon them in the light of the long lost and now newly discovered "Koine." We will begin with the word translated "*assurance*." Faith is the assurance of things hoped for.<sup>1</sup> The Greek word is Hypostasis, and is a legal term. In one of the discovered papyri is the petition of a lady—Dionysia—to the Prefect of Egypt. She had evidently had some difficulties with her property; in order to prove her right to it she sent certain documents

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi., 1.

to him as evidence of her title. These documents are called Hypostasis, they indicate the right to the property, and may be translated *Title Deeds*.

In the light of the use of this word we may translate Hebrews xi., 1, thus "Faith is the *title deed* of things hoped for and not seen." "Title deed" is a much stronger word than "assurance." A simple illustration may help us. Let us suppose a lawyer comes one day and places a document in our hands, telling us that it is the title deed of a big property left to us by some friend in a distant land. Though we have neither paid for nor seen the property, yet we at once realise that it is ours, because we hold the Title Deed. So is the Title Deed of our inheritance put into our hand by God, and though we have not seen the things He has prepared for us, yet we look upon them as our *present possessions*, not saying we *hope* we have, but "we have."

All through this 11th chapter we see that the Old Testament saints realised that the things promised by God in the future, were a *present* possession, because their Faith took the promises of God as the Title Deed of their future inheritance.

#### ENDS.

We take another word—"ends"—"Upon whom the ends of the ages are come."<sup>1</sup> Amongst the papyri we find a whole series of Wills, and we notice how often this word

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x., 11.

"ends" is used in a technical sense—it is a legal word in documents dealing with property which has descended to a man from his father. The late Dr. Moulton thinks this word ought to be translated "toll." "Upon whom the toll of the ages are come."<sup>1</sup> This reminds one of Tennyson's line, "We, the heirs of all the ages." We, the people who are living in the 20th Century, have received "tolls" from all the ages and nations—from Greece the "tolls" of literature and Philosophy, from Rome the "tolls" of Law and Organisation, and from the Jew the "toll" of the Old and New Testament, and of the experience of God's dealing with them through their national life. How much better we ought to be after receiving the tribute of succeeding generations, and how careful we ought to be as the guardians of these tributes, to hand them down intact to the future generations.

We will glance at the phrase "*It is written.*" "*It is written*" in the Greek is one word *gegraptae*. We find now that this word is a legal formula generally added to a legal document, and signifying authoritativeness, that what is written cannot be questioned, its genuineness cannot be doubted.<sup>2</sup> This word is often used by our Divine Saviour in His teaching, and in His quotations from the Old Testament. He meets the Tempter with this word when quoting from Deuteronomy, signifying thereby the

<sup>1</sup> From Egyptian Rubbish Heaps. p. 28-9.

<sup>2</sup> Deissman "*St. Paul*," p. 104.



authoritativeness of His own teaching, and of the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>

St. Luke, being a Greek, more or less uses this word. Other Apostles, especially St. John, use an equivalent Hebrew word "Amen"—Verily or Truly. This is a Semitic word which we find in Hebrew, Syriac, Ethiopic, and Arabic languages; it has a fundamental meaning 'the affirmation of a fact.' Besides its liturgical uses in hymns and prayers, it is a formula of solemn affirmation, and was used by Christ no less than 77 times in the Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

Professor Dolman remarks that as our Saviour had a great dislike to the Semitic way of confirming a statement by an oath, he adopted this formula. In St. John's Gospel the formula is doubled to add more emphasis, and so our Saviour spoke 'as one having authority and not as the scribes.'<sup>3</sup> When a Rabbi would add impressiveness or authority to a doctrine, he would add to it "Amen," signifying that it was received by Moses on Sinai. In the Primitive Church, sometimes the word was used by the reader at the end of the lessons, instead of "here endeth the lesson," meaning that what he had read was authoritative.<sup>4</sup>

The Old and New Testament are authoritative, and unchangeable, with this mark attached to them. The teaching of Christ must always be the *final* appeal for His Church.

<sup>1</sup> Luke vi. ; 1 Cor. iv., 6.

<sup>2</sup> "Words of Jesus," p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> Mark i., 22.

<sup>4</sup> Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, p. 53.

## MYSTERY.

Another word we may notice is "*Mystery*." St. Paul uses it 21 times in i Cor., Eph., and Col. This word has nothing to do with the Greek mysteries, but St. Paul used it as it was used in those days in the Septuagint and Jewish Apocaleptic writings. The Greek word "*musterion*"<sup>1</sup> at this period meant "the political or military plans of a king,"<sup>2</sup> which had not been divulged until the king revealed them at a set time, and put them into operation. In the Gospels the word is used in this sense.

## PHILOS.

In conjunction with this word we will take another Greek word "*Philos*" (friend). The word "friend" was applied to royal officers, cabinet ministers, and high officials of the court of the Ptolemies, in Egypt. In the LXX it is rendered as "prince."<sup>4</sup> These two words receive greater lustre from our acquaintance with their ancient use. From the foundation of the world God has had His plan, which had not been divulged to the world, until the set time when He revealed it to His friends, His chosen ministers; even as the Ptolemies had their plans, political and military, and revealed them only to the inner circle of high officials called in those days "friends." Our Saviour says to His Disciples, "I call you no more

<sup>1</sup> 2 Mac. xiii., 21.

<sup>2</sup> Tobit xii., 7—11.

<sup>3</sup> Enoch viii., 2; xiv., 10.

<sup>4</sup> Esther ii., 18.

servants but ' friends ' (i.e., His inner circle or Cabinet ministers) for all things that I have heard of my Father (the King) I have made known unto you." All believers in Christ are become His friends, the kings and princes of His court, to whom the Holy Spirit is revealing day by day God's great plan.<sup>1</sup>

St. Paul says, " Let a man account of us as stewards of the mysteries of God."<sup>2</sup> The word *steward* used by Plutarch and other Greek writers, denoted a clerk or administrator in a law court, whose office it was to carry out the bidding of a master—so we can translate the passage, " Let a man account of us as ' administrators ' of the plan or counsel of God."

#### DIATHEKE.

The word *Diatheke* is no doubt a difficult one to translate. It is uncertain whether it should be translated " testament " or " covenant." The Vulgate went to one extreme and uniformly translated it " testament " in the 30 times it is mentioned in the New Testament. The Revised Version went to the other extreme and rendered it " covenant " in every instance with one exception (in Heb. ix., 16, 17), and even there the marginal reading is " covenant " : whilst the Authorised Version adopted the happy medium and rendered the word thirteen times " testament," and seventeen times " covenant." If the words " covenant " and " testament " were synonymous

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cot.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. iv., 1.

terms, the variation in their use would be a matter of indifference. A *covenant* is a treaty or compact between two or more nations or people for mutual help, support, or protection, as the covenant between Hiram and Solomon, David and Jonathan, Abraham and the Amorites, etc. A *testament* is the construction of one man, or party, independent of and involving no mutual obligation on the part of other people, and is equivalent to the making of a will in the present day.

Of this nature are some of the promises of God made to Abraham and his children. It is also a remarkable fact that in the whole range of Greek literature long before Christ, the word *diatheke* is never used for "covenant" excepting in one instance only when it is used by "Aristophanes" in his "Clouds," and in our Saviour's time no Greek writer would ever use "diatheke" for "covenant." The correct word for covenant was *Sundiatheke*. All the Papyri and Inscriptions ever found containing the word *diatheke* indicate only a *Will*.<sup>1</sup> Prof. Deissmann declares "there is ample material to back me up in the statement, that no one in the Mediterranean world in the 1st Century A.D. would have thought of finding in *Diatheke* the idea of covenant."<sup>2</sup> It seems therefore, reasonable and legitimate to translate the word *diatheke* in the Greek Testament by "testament" (Will). St. Paul

<sup>1</sup> G. Milligan & Moulton. *Expositor* vi. Series, p. 562.

<sup>2</sup> *Light from Anc. East.* p. 341.

found in his Greek Bible the idea that God had executed a Will in our favour."<sup>1</sup>

In view of the universal use of this word as *Will*, our Saviour would use it thus also. This brings us to the import of the word used by Him in the Upper Room. The closing scenes of His life are drawing near, and He anticipates His departure: His thoughts lovingly turn to His Disciples, he must make provision for them! and in that Upper Room He executes a Will—He hands them this Will embodied in the cup saying "This cup is the New Testament (Will) in my blood which is shed for you."<sup>2</sup> That Will had to come into force by His death, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator, for a testament is of force after men are dead." Our Saviour made a Will in our favour, by His death it came into force. The terms of this Will are "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people . . . for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more."<sup>3</sup>

One passage in the Hebrews needs explanation, as it seemingly militates against the idea of a Will as described above. Our Saviour is here called the *mediator* of the New Testament. At first sight a mediator indicates the presence of a covenant, and our Saviour coming be-

<sup>1</sup> Deissmann, "St. Paul," p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxii., 20.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. viii., 10—12.

tween the two parties. But the Greek word "mesites" does not always mean mediator, but stands also for "pledge" or "surety."<sup>1</sup> Taking it thus, our Saviour not only made a Will in our favour and brought it into force by His death, but stands as surety for it, by His risen and glorious life !

#### LOSS.

Let us notice another word, *Zimia*, "*loss*." St. Paul says "I count all things but *loss* for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."<sup>2</sup>

This word was the one used when speaking of the bones thrown into the streets for dogs.<sup>3</sup> St. Paul considers all his intellectual and social possessions, as bones fit only for dogs, in comparison with the excellency of Christ.

#### PROGRAPHINAI.

Take another Greek word, "*prographinai*," "set forth." In Galatians, St. Paul says, "Before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently *set forth*."<sup>4</sup> In St. Paul's days this word was used for public notices and placards, placed by *magisterial authority* in public places. He therefore declares by the use of this word, that the Gospel of Christ was an authoritative pronouncement commissioned by Christ Himself.

Again taking the word "*schoolmaster*," St. Paul says, "The law was our school master to bring us to Christ."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cremer Biblical & Theological Lexicon, p. 441.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii., 8.    <sup>3</sup> Phil. iii., 8.    <sup>4</sup> Gal. iii., 1.    <sup>5</sup> Gal. iii., 24.



The Greek word used here and translanted schoolmaster is "Paidagogos."

Now the Paidagogos was not the schoolmaster at all! but a faithful slave whose chief duty it was to bring his master's sons safely to and from school, keeping them from mischief on the way. So the law, St. Paul says, was the faithful slave to guide us safely to the true Teacher—Jesus Christ.

Though Greek was the universal language, it was not the only one in use in the Roman Empire. There were besides, the *home languages* of the various peoples. St. Paul tells us that the people of Lycaonia, although conversant with Greek, declared "in their own speech" that "the gods had come down in the likeness of men." Similarly in our own times, although English is spoken throughout the United Kingdom, yet the Welsh have their own language, which they often speak amongst themselves, and use in the churches.

### ARAMAIC,

#### THE HOME LANGUAGE OF THE JEWS.

The national language of the Jews before the Babylonian Captivity, was Hebrew, which can be divided into three periods—first, the Mosaic or Archaic—second, the classical highly developed period of the Monarchial days, when its wealth of utterance appeared in poetry, proverbs and prophecy—third, the time of their decline, during the incursions of the Syrian armies. It almost ceased to be a

spoken language during the Captivity, being superseded by Aramaic, the language of the Babylonian Empire of which the Jews, in their captivity, had to acquire a knowledge. Those people whom the Assyrians brought over from beyond the Euphrates to colonise Palestine, knew no other language—so both the people and the country came under the sway of Aramaic, the kindred language to Hebrew.

Therefore in our Saviour's time, when the lesson from the Hebrew Bible was read in the synagogue, it had to be translated into Aramaic for the people to understand.

Palestinian Aramaic was spoken in three dialects, Samaritan, Galilean, and Judean. The peculiarity of the Galilean, dialect was due to the admixture of Gentile inhabitants, Egyptians, Arabians, Greeks and Romans; the brogue of Galilee was quite distinguishable from that of Judea, and was considered corrupt and barbarious by the Judeans. The servant of the High Priest could not mistake the brogue of St. Peter, but said "Thy speech bewrayeth thee."

Two thousand years ago, the Jews were obliged to learn Greek, the language of the government and commerce, but Aramaic still remained the language of home and worship; probably our Saviour knew and talked Greek, but His home language was Aramaic.

We have traces of Aramaic in the Gospels.<sup>1</sup> When our Saviour went to Jairus' home to raise the little damsel from the dead, He used most appropriately the very word

<sup>1</sup> Mark v., 41.

which her mother most probably would have used, when wakening her in the morning, "Talitha cumi," "little lamb." He does not use the official Greek but the gentle home language of the mother.

Again, we have before us, a poor man who had been deaf for a long time, perhaps from his childhood.<sup>1</sup> When our Lord opened his ears He spoke to him in his own home language, Aramaic, "Ephphatha," so the first words he heard were the familiar ones he would have heard at home.

Another word Christ uses in the Garden of Gethsemane, is "Abba."<sup>2</sup> It was the title always given the father by his *children*, and was never used by servants. He takes the word of children, with its homeliness and close relationship. It is wonderful that we through the suffering of Christ, have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba—Father—not as Servants or slaves, but as children.<sup>3</sup>

Again, our Saviour, in the supreme hour of death, breathes out His last words, quoting the Messianic Psalm—"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,"<sup>4</sup> in the language of His childhood and home.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark vii., 34.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xiv., 36.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii., 15.

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## CHAPTER II

### The Preparation of the World for the Coming of Christ

#### ROMAN RELIGION.

**I**T was the current teaching of Pharasaic Judaism that God was only the God of the Jews and that the Gentiles were outside the pale of His providence. In Talmudic writings God is portrayed as having His Face turned away from the Gentiles. "If a Gentile were to keep the *whole law* it would avail him nothing: if he prayed to Jehovah his prayer is not heard."<sup>1</sup> "If he commit sin and repent that does not help him. Even for his alms he gets no credit."<sup>2</sup>

So St. Paul is impelled to ask "Is He the God of the Jews only, is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." St. Paul not only makes the assertion, but proves his point. He declares on Mars Hill that "God hath made of one blood (or more correctly of one Father) all nations of men"<sup>3</sup> and that therefore He is God of Jew and Gentile

<sup>1</sup> de Barim Rabba l.      <sup>2</sup> Pesikta clvi., A; xii., B.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xvii., 26.

alike. Though the Jews had unique advantage over the nations when God committed to them the Divine oracles (i.e. the Old Testament) yet God did not leave Himself without witness to the Gentiles in that "He did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness";<sup>1</sup> and further St. Paul declares, in his writings to the Romans, "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."<sup>2</sup>

It is related that St. Bernard of Clairvaux, standing outside his monastery, pointed to the stately forest trees, and said, "These are my teachers in Theology."

So, although the Gentile nations throughout the ages did not have the Divine revelation which was vouchsafed to the Hebrew prophets, yet they had the revelation of God in Nature. Even Philo the Jewish philosopher said, "We ascend from below upwards as if by a celestial ladder, guessing at the Creator from His works." The Greek philosopher Aristotle said, "We perceive God from His work," and so also declares Cicero the Roman, "No man hath seen God, but He is recognised in His work."

St. Paul further shows that although the Gentile did not have the law of Moses given by inspiration, yet God had placed in every heart a subtle instinct, that he might feel after Him. Whether it is believed that Man was created

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiv., 17.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i., 20.



by a special creation out of the earth as we have in Genesis, or by a long process of evolution, man is distinguished from the lower creation by being created in God's image, and receiving into his nostrils the breath of life. So that, as the needle of the compass turns to the North, so man, Jew or Gentile, seeks after God. Psychology, the new science, investigating to discover the working of this power in the heart of man, designates it "subconsciousness," but the late Dr. Driver is nearer the mark when he calls it "God consciousness." In many, this inner light was smothered and almost extinguished, in others it burnt brightly, leading them Godwards.

Crito, when discussing with Plato about God and eternity, remarked, "Thou reasonest well, else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire? it is divinity that stirs within me." Again the Roman, Seneca said, speaking of God, "He is near thee, He is with thee, He is within thee."

## ROMAN RELIGION

Roman religion in its earliest days was simple and patriarchal, and devoid of the complexities of Greek mythology. The Romans believed themselves to be living in the midst of a population of spiritual beings (called Numenæ) whose attitude towards mankind was determined by their deeds and words.

The Roman deities, unlike those of the Greeks, had no human form, and consequently no virtues or vices. They

betrayed their existence only by their manifestation in nature. Such deities (Numenæ) could not live in temples made with hands nor be represented by images. If they resided anywhere at all, it was at the doorway, or hearth of the house, as the guardian of the home. So the home became the first and central place of the Roman religion : the family became the foundation of such a worship, and Janus was recognised by the nation, as the oldest god, the god of beginnings, Deorum Deus : his festival fell on the first day of the first month of the year.

As a ' Home ' religion, the head of the house, the Pater familias, became High priest, his daughters Vestals, who had the care of the sacred fire, and his sons Flamines, the sacrificing priests. The Family worship gradually grew into a state worship. The King then, as the head of the nation, became the High priest with Vestals and Flamines. There was no distinction between the laws spiritual and temporal, because originally there was no difference between the magistrate and the priest. But this primitive patriarchal religion became modified and altered in time, by the introduction of numerous gods and their cults, both Greek and Italian. A more showy and emotional ritual followed under the direction of the Sibylline books. There came a period of degeneration of the Roman religion about the year B.C. 218, consequent upon the fourteen years long struggle between the Romans and Carthaginians. For fourteen years Rome had suffered from terrible slaughter

and pestilence. The economy of the whole country was upset. Scarcely had it recovered from such a calamity, than it was plunged into a war with Macedonia. As Livy records "The numbers of ill-omened events (prodigia) announced from all parts of the (Roman) world, caused the people great apprehension." People feared that the old deities were either angry with them, or indifferent to their miseries, and they were compelled to resort to new isms and deities.

Twelve Greek gods were introduced under Roman names ; still there was no palpable help, and the strong fibre of the Roman people was beginning to give way.

Then they thought the only remedy was to bring to Rome the sacred stone of the Magna Mater, the great goddess of Pessinus in Pergamos. The stone was brought and placed on the Palatine hill, and the fourth of April became her annual festival, and was called by the Greeks, Megalesia. But the introduction of this new worship was a most dangerous remedy, as it was of a very immoral character, and it also brought in its train Oriental Astrology, called by the Romans " Chaldæi."

The worship of Bellona followed from Cappadocia, and that of Isis and Mithras also in due time. These immoral and degenerate worships were favoured by a new class of men composed mostly of foreigners and slaves, who had come into prominence chiefly because of the great losses suffered by the patrician and middle classes through the war.

The Rationalistic Philosophy of Greece had already discredited Greek Mythology, and now it attacked with full force this grotesque and degrading religion of Rome. One example of this destructive criticism came from Ennius, the first great Latin genius who wrote in Latin, and who is called the Father of Roman song. He translated a treatise of Euhemerus on his supposed voyage. In this voyage Euhemerus went from Arabia to the island Panchara in the Indian Ocean, where he found a Temple of Jupiter, and by it a large stone column with the true history of gods, which showed that they were mere men, the days of their birth and death being given there : he remarked that they were gradually raised to the rank of gods and worshipped as such. Such a naturalistic idea of gods then became the common property of educated men, and can be traced in the plays and writings of Lucullus, Cicero, and others, and this rationalistic spirit pervaded even the uneducated classes.

The old rites and superstitions were losing their hold on the minds of the people, Jupiter, Mars, and Apollo, were fading from the thoughts of the upper class, and their worship was left to the poor and vulgar ; if retained at all by the upper class it was only as a matter of policy. The Temples were fast falling into ruin, and Cicero writes of frequent thefts of statues and other property from them. Now the oracles were dumb, the altars cold and deserted, and the people regretful of the past, and hopeless of the

future ! This condition of things is vividly reflected in the writings of the time of Augustus, such as those of Livy, Horace, and Virgil, and was typical of the religion throughout the Roman Empire.

A great number of people died without even a glimpse of the hope of Immortality. Amongst the aristocracy of Rome, pessimistic views were held ; the grave is called " eternal home " and death " eternal sleep." One met such typical inscriptions on tombstones as " Farewell for ever " ; and that similar views were held in Egypt is shown by the following letter of " Irene an Egyptian Lady to a family in mourning," a second Century papyrus from Oxyrhynchus.

" Irene to Taonnophris and Philo, Good Comfort ! I was very sorry and wept over the departed one as I wept for Didymus . . . but nevertheless against such things one can do nothing, therefore comfort ye one another. Fare ye well." Poor Irene in her desire to comfort her friends could give no better consolation than this.

With the accession of Augustus, B.C. 31, an era of religious revival began. Once again people, experiencing daily benefits and blessings, felt that they could not be attributed to mere chance, but must be the gift of a deity, yet being unable to name the donor, realised their altar to an " unknown god."

" Capito, a priest of Demeter of Pergamos, reared such an altar in the city, which was discovered a few years since. On the road from Phalarum to Athens was found another

altar to an unknown god, erected at Olympia, and discovered in 1909."<sup>1</sup>

There are numbers of inscriptions with a vow, and prayers for salvation : of course many of these prayers are for deliverance from temporal evils, from sickness, poverty, danger, etc., but there is an almost imperceptible longing for a more lasting salvation, akin even to that of the Christian, and this was probably what St. Paul took and ennobled. One inscription was found at Aski Sheher in Phrygia thus : " To Papas, for his children's salvation to Men." <sup>2</sup> (Papa was the title commonly applied to a supreme god in Asia Minor).

Here is another inscription at Nakoleia, copied by Ramsay in 1883, " Metrophilos son of Asklepes with his wife Ammia and for their own family, salvation. To Zeus, the thunderer, a vow." <sup>3</sup> And there were other religions, cults, and mysteries, which strove to effect a closer union with the Gods ; for example, Orphism, a development of the older Dionysian cult, the original feature of which had been the delirious frenzy of the Bacchanial orgies, in which its votaries were believed to be possessed by the deity. Though still preserving this feature, Orphism altered the conception of what the deity was, and sought to partake of him, not by intoxication, but by spiritual ecstasy, and

<sup>1</sup> Deissmann " St. Paul," p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> Ramsay " Discoveries N.T.," p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid* p. 186.



substituted abstinence and purification, for the original Dionysian drunkenness.

Similar to Orphism was the cult of Sybele and Attis : its centre was in Phrygia, but it was widely diffused in Asia Minor. By spiritual ecstasy the worshipper was supposed to enter into union with the deity. A notion of regeneration stands in the forefront of the ritual and symbolism of these religions, and amid all the savage rites, one can see a passionate desire for fulness of life, and for a real and enduring salvation. Men's eyes were turned toward the East in longing desire and expectation, ready to eagerly welcome the satisfaction of this craving. The magician, taking advantage of this sense of emptiness, greatly exercised his art. The world was full of his books, St. Paul constantly met with them. Generals conducted campaigns, guided by the entrails of beasts, and flight of birds ; Elymas, the sorcerer, exercised his hypnotic power on Roman officials like Sergius Paulus. Oriental astrologists by the use of mystic writings, captivated thousands—it was of such parchments St. Paul made a great bonfire at Ephesus.

We notice also that amongst the literary classes there were many who aspired to higher and loftier ideals, and keenly asked, " Who will show us any good." They sought a leader or teacher who would raise them to a higher standard. The Stoic and Epicurean Schools thought this saving hand was entirely to be found in the existing

world ; assuming that the individual is too weak to evolve a right system of life of himself, they suggested he should take some wise man for his model. " We must seek for ourselves," says Epicurus, " some noble man whom we may have continually before our eyes, so that we may live as if he regarded us, and even act as though he saw the action."<sup>1</sup>

" Keep one in your heart," says Seneca, " to honour him with a reverence that can sanctify your inmost being ; choose yourself a Cato, or should he be too austere, choose a man of more gentle temper, a Laelius ; choose someone whose deeds and words please you, who bears a lovable soul in his demeanour, him keep ever before your eyes as your guardian and your model."<sup>2</sup>

The worth of Aristides, the praise of Themistocles, the virtue of Epaminondas and the glory of Cato were a never ending theme to the schools of rhetoric. Plutarch devotes all his life to setting chosen heroes before the minds of youth. Alas ! all these heroes proved after all to be only human. The witty lines referring to our English philosopher, Bacon, which, speaking of him as " the greatest, the wisest and the *meanest*" would apply to all the Roman and Greek worthies ! The late Bishop Lightfoot regards even Seneca to be of mixed character.

These human models proving but broken reeds, men sighed for a perfect man. This knowledge of imperfection deepened itself into a sense of guilt and of sin. Seneca

<sup>1</sup> Seneca Ep. xi.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca Ep. xi.

says "I toss upon a sea of imperfection."<sup>1</sup> "Human nature is by nature perverse and hankers after the forbidden and perilous."<sup>2</sup> Again he says, "We are all slaves of sin," expressing the same feeling as St. Paul, who, when speaking of the captivity of sin, says "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

Some philosophers suggested that the effort to follow the example of some good man having failed, the will power should be exercised to enable them to live under the guidance of reason, and so liberate themselves from the world and its influence, and attain at last complete freedom. But man's will, unassisted by divine power, could not attain the ideal. Seneca, feeling the absolute necessity of a power *outside* of himself, (or in Christian terms, Divine Grace), to work out his salvation, confesses, "No man is good without God. Can anyone rise superior to fortune save by God's help."<sup>3</sup> So, as the Fathers of the primitive Church put it, philosophy was a schoolmaster leading the Roman world to Christ. Certain Greeks, representatives of the Western Roman world, were saying, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." So that the Greek Roman world is well likened to the "Pool of Bethesda, divinely stirred for the healing of the nations."

## THE JEWISH DISPERSION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

In order to carry on the work of preparation already begun

<sup>1</sup> Seneca De Vita vii., 18.      <sup>2</sup> *ibid* De Clamontia i., 24.

<sup>3</sup> Seneca Ep. xli., 2.

in the heart of the heathen, God brought amongst them the seed of Abraham, numbering between six and seven million—the very aristocracy of religion, and scattered them in all parts of the Empire, both in towns and country villages. Their presence is evidenced by numerous inscriptions which have recently been discovered in Asia Minor, bearing passages from Deuteronomy.

“It is not easy,” says Strabo, speaking of the Jews, “to find a spot in the world which has not sheltered this people.” Herod Agrippa enumerates to his patron Caligula all the places that have been occupied by the Jews—Egypt, Phœnicia, Syria, Asia Minor, Thessaly, Macedonia, Cyprus, Crete and Rome.<sup>1</sup> St. James writes to “the twelve tribes scattered abroad,” St. Peter writes to the “scattered sojourners.”<sup>2</sup>

It is computed that seven men out of every hundred were Jews in the Roman Empire. The influx of the Jew into the Empire was encouraged by its rulers; especially in the province of Asia. They proved the cementing link between the Greeks and the barbarians. Antiochus settled two thousand families from Babylonia, in Lydia and Phrigia alone.<sup>3</sup> The rulers also found them most useful commercially. Their big banking houses at Antioch and Alexandria were indispensable. The market of Alexandria, the biggest emporium in the Empire, was in their hands.

<sup>1</sup> Philo. Leg ad Kai, 578.

<sup>2</sup> James i, 1; 1 Peter.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus Antiq., iii., 4.

They were entrusted with the export of corn from Alexandria to Rome. Philo, the Hebrew philosopher, belonged to one of the noblest and wealthiest families of Alexandria. His brother, Alexander, was the controller of the Custom House on the Arabian frontier. Another brother, Tiberius Alexander, was a high official in Egypt, and became subsequently the governor of Judea before A.D. 48.

Though the Jews were welcomed by the rulers in their own interests, yet they had a very chilly reception from the populace. The opinions expressed of them by leading writers of the time, were most disparaging. Cicero, Plutarch, and Tacitus depicted them as superstitious barbarians. Juvenal made them the subject of his satire. Despite all this the Jew began to make a spiritual impression on the people : there was something in his religious life which met their religious hunger. Here was a nation, once prone to all sorts of idolatry and heathen practises, purged by the purgatorial fire of the Babylonian Captivity.

It is a noteworthy fact that Israel in all his long history, so prone to idolatry, never again after this 70 years captivity, relapsed to it. Here was the worshipper of one God whose nature was holy, Who was invisible, yet seeing all with love and compassion. These Jews of the Dispersion were losing their religious exclusiveness towards other nations, and were more liberally disposed towards them.

We find Tobit, in the land of captivity, prayed God to show His strength and majesty to a nation of sinners

amongst whom he (Tobit) was living ; and then addressed them in these words, " Turn and do righteousness before Him ; who can tell if He will accept you and have mercy upon you ? " <sup>1</sup> At this period the Jews showed a great desire to proselytize the Gentiles : even the strictest sect, the Pharisees compassed sea and land to make proselytes of the people round.

Hillel, a pillar of the Jewish Church, a contemporary of Herod the Great said, " Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving and pursuing peace, loving thy fellow creature ; the wings of Shekinah are wide enough to enfold all humanity." Again he said " Love the creatures, and bring them nigh to the Torah." Another famous Rabbi, Eliezer ben Hyrkanos, said, " God says, ' I draw near, I do not repel,' so do likewise. If a man comes to thee and wishes to be received, bring him near and do not repel him." <sup>2</sup> And again, " A man may wish to become a Priest or a Levite, but he cannot because his father was not, but if he wishes to become righteous, he can do so, even if he be a heathen." <sup>3</sup> Again it was pointed out that the law was given in the Desert— openly and in a place that belonged to no one in particular. If the law had been given in Palestine, the Israelites could have said to the nations, ' It is our property, you have no share in it,' but now it is

<sup>1</sup> Tobit xiii., 6, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Mechilta on Ex. xviii., 6.

<sup>3</sup> Midrash Tillim on Ps. cxlvi., 7.



common property, whoever will accept, let him come and accept.”<sup>1</sup>

The Jews erected synagogues everywhere in all parts of the Roman world. Remains of these have been found at Corinth, Capernaum, etc. The synagogue services were simple, free of all material elements, here there were no mysteries, no sacrifices, no ceremonials, for Prayers, the reading of the Old Testament and the Exposition thereon, comprised the whole service. These synagogues were the more frequented by the Gentiles, because at this time all club meetings and other gatherings had been strictly prohibited. The Scripture read in the synagogue was called the Septuagint version of the O.T., and was not read in Hebrew or Aramaic, but in Greek—the language of the Empire, and therefore this Greek translation is rightly called the first Gentile Missionary.

The feature of Judaism which was foremost in interesting the Gentile world, was its teaching regarding the Future. The Poets and Philosophers of pagan antiquity had, as a rule, represented the evolution of man as a gradual but inexorable decay: they placed the Golden Age at the beginning of the world, and asserted that the world would end in complete destruction: but the Jewish idea was the exact opposite, their Golden Age was in the future.

This belief in the progressive degeneration of mankind, and the gloomy foreboding of the future, was cherished

<sup>1</sup> Mechilta on Ex. xix., 2.

by the folk of many races. The teaching of the Greeks was, first of all, that the Olympian gods had made the golden race of men, who fared like the gods themselves, always making merry, and untroubled by toil or care, for the teeming earth bore of its own accord an abundance of all things good, and there was no old age.<sup>1</sup> This race passed away, and was succeeded by the silver age, in which men remained little children for 100 years, and, when they reached maturity, they perished by their own folly, having refused to worship the Immortals as man ought to do. Then came the Brazen age—with men strong and terrible, lovers of war and violence, and without any pity! And lastly, came the days of iron, days and nights of hard work and grief: men were born old with white hair, fathers strove with sons and *vice versa*, guest strove with host, and friend with friend. Goodness, justice, and piety, were now of no account, when even the gods Aidos and Nemesis departed to heaven and men could find no help or succour.

Similar ideas to these were found amongst the ancient people of Mexico and India. Orthodox Hindus recognized four ages (yugas) of the world, roughly corresponding to those we have just mentioned. They all looked to the future with apprehension. The ancient Peruvians looked forward to the destruction of the world, so that they stood in terror of every lunar and solar eclipse: at the end of every fifty-two years they thought this catastrophe immin-

<sup>1</sup> Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 109, 201.

ent. They extinguished every fire, and all the priests, followed by the people, marched solemnly to a mountain three miles from the capital. There they watched with bated breath for the rising of the Pleiades: when this constellation was seen, the priests rekindled the fire, placing it on the breast of a human sacrifice, while the multitude rejoiced in the assurance that the world would surely survive for another cycle of fifty-two years.

A similar state of mind in the Græco-Roman world is recorded by Tacitus, Suetonius and Dion Cassius.

This idea of degeneration is also found in Daniel, where the several stages of the world's history are depicted in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the Golden Image; Its head of gold, breast and arms of silver, body and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet partly of iron and partly of clay. But in Daniel's interpretation we see the golden age beyond the feet of iron and clay, whereas the heathen idea ended with the iron.

At this opportune moment, the teaching of Judaism about the Future made a strong appeal. The centuries immediately preceding the Christian era showed great literary activity amongst the Jews: they produced the Apocalyptic Writings popularly known as 'Tracts for the times,' and many of these writings dealt with the future Golden Age—based on the Old Testament teaching. They interpreted the expression 'the day of the Lord,' and 'the great day' as referring to that coming age, and it was

called in the Talmud the 'age of the Messiah' <sup>1</sup> the age which is all sabbath, the age which is all good, the age wherein the righteous sit with crowns upon their heads, and enjoy the splendour of a Divine presence. The Prophet Zechariah proclaims "One day (age) which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night . . . there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts."<sup>2</sup> The characteristics of the age described both in the O.T. and in the Apocalyptic writings are so numerous that only a few can be taken here. The prophet Habakkuk says: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea."<sup>3</sup> In Isaiah we read: "In the last days . . . He shall judge many nations, He shall rebuke many people, they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."<sup>4</sup> The Ethiopian Enoch in Chapters xxxviii. and xlvii. of his book, depicts the fall of ungodly kings and the end of sin and misery. The Psalm of Solomon (chapter vii.) gives us the restoration of the Throne of David. This wonderful age was to be ushered in by a Divine Person; in the book of Genesis He is called the seed of the woman; by Moses—a Prophet like himself; by Isaiah—one whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; and by Daniel—the Messiah (Christ).

<sup>1</sup> Sanhedr xcix., A.

<sup>2</sup> Zech. xiv.

<sup>3</sup> Hab. ii., 14.

<sup>4</sup> Is. ii., 4.

## PREPARATION FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST 51

The Apocalyptic writers revised this O.T. teaching. The Messiah is called by Enoch "the righteous one" whose name was proclaimed by the Creator before the creation of the sun and stars.<sup>1</sup> The Psalms of Solomon depict Him as the sinless one. In the Midrash He is said to have been created before the seven great things in the world: and His premundane existence is also certified in the Targum.<sup>2</sup>

It is very striking that in rabbinical documents His premundane existence is a matter of common belief. He is greater than the patriarchs, higher than Moses, loftier than angels. So in our Saviour's time there were many like the aged Simeon looking for the consolation of Israel, there were many Annas, speaking of Jesus to all that looked for redemption in Israel, and many Josephs of Arimathæa looking for the Kingdom of God. Thus the great future hope and expectation of the dispersed Jews, made a great impression upon the Gentile world.

It is perhaps rightly supposed by some writers that the prophecy of Isaiah re-echoes in the writings of Virgil.<sup>3</sup> "The final age whereof the Sibyle sang, has come at last, and now is born anew." "Now too, returns the Virgin, now returns the rule of Saturn, from Heaven on high, descending unto earth a child is born." No doubt Virgil is not speaking here of the Messiah, but of his patron

<sup>1</sup> Edersheim. Life & Times of Jesus the Messiah. Vol. 1, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Inch. Par. Toledeth, xiv.

<sup>3</sup> Virgil, Eclogue iv.

Pollio's child ; but his style and language are those of the prophet Isaiah.

The attractiveness of the teaching described above resulted in a great increase in the adherents of the synagogue. These proselytes were admitted into the privileges of Judaism by the rites of circumcision and baptism, and were expected to offer sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem, when in that city. St. Paul, when addressing the synagogue congregation in Antioch of Pisidia, recognises that the audience was composed of two sections, Israelites and the Gentile Proselytes.<sup>1</sup> Besides men, a number of society ladies were attracted to the synagogue. These women occupied a high position in Society in those days, whether in the Eastern or Western provinces. Thus women were appointed under the Empire as magistrates, as presidents of the games, and even the Jews elected a woman as chief of the Synagogue at Smyrna.<sup>2</sup> They are referred to as "honorable women" by St. Paul. The adhesion of these women to the synagogues became a familiar theme of contemporary writers, such as Josephus, Strabo and Juvenal.

<sup>3</sup>An inscription on a tomb-stone tells us of a Roman lady of rank, Paula Veturia, who was baptised when 76 years old, adopted the name of Sarah, and who died at

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii., 26.

<sup>2</sup> Ramsay. St. Paul, p. 102 ; Acts xvii., 12.

<sup>3</sup> Hansrath N.T. Times. Vol. i, p. 133.



the age of 91. Judaism also attracted converts in other parts of the world, in Arabia, Parthia, etc., who occupied high positions. <sup>1</sup>A king of Yemen in Arabia gave up his faith in favour of that of the synagogue. The king of Adiabene—Izates—whose kingdom was between the confines of the Roman and Parthian kingdoms, with his mother, Queen Helena, and his brother Monobazus, joined the synagogue. Queen Helena had a palace in Jerusalem where she was a great help in the severe famine mentioned in the Acts, procuring corn from Egypt, and figs from Cyprus, to feed the famine-stricken people.

With all this widely diffused knowledge of the religion of the synagogue, it becomes very easy to understand what led the Magi, the wise men of the East, to undertake their journey to Bethlehem. The expectation of an epoch making birth was current in the East. In their land, the advent of Messiah was common knowledge, and His approach considered imminent, and more or less associated with a star. In the Apocalyptic writings in the section written by Judah, we read <sup>2</sup>“Over you shall a star proceed out of Jacob and a man shall arise from my seed like the sun of righteousness.”

The Babylonians and Arabians were highly-skilled in the art of Astronomy, and were great observers of the stars. They watched their conjunction, their position at

<sup>1</sup> Edersheim i., p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Testimony of the 12 Patriarchs.

rising, at zenith, and at setting. A set of 70 tablets was discovered in Babylonia, dating from 1600 years B.C. with all these details noted down.

When the Magi came, the reason given was not exactly as we have it in the Authorised Version, "we have seen His star in the East" but "we have seen His star *rising*." The phenomenon of the *star* may have been a special star made visible by God to lead these seekers after truth to Jerusalem, or it may have been the conjunction of Mars and Jupiter in the constellation of Saturn, as in Keppler's theory; whichever it was, the star led them to Christ! We see that the course of the history of mankind has been a preparation for the revelation of Christ. The Spirit of God has been at work in the hearts of men, and at last Christianity came as the ripe fruit of ages of development, in a soil already prepared. So the East hastened to the Saviour's cradle, and the West was eagerly saying, "Sirs, we would see Jesus."

#### THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY.

Now we have reached a time when the world was disposed to welcome the glad tidings of the Gospel of Christ: we have already seen the preparation for it:—

(1) By a universal language to facilitate its speedy diffusion.

(2) By a religious awakening of the Gentile world.

(3) By the dispersion of the Jews in the known world, and the leavening of the peoples with (O.T. knowledge) the Messianic hope.

But there still remained many obstacles in the way of complete success. There was, as yet, no united Empire, and petty states warred with each other, raising insuperable barriers. There were sandy tractless deserts, mountainous regions the haunts of bandits, and seas infested with pirates. A united Empire was needed to abolish all dividing lines, and to form the world into a comity. The world needed to be brought together under one beneficial rule, thus securing for it amity, peace and prosperity. This was achieved by the genius of Cæsar : by the far-sighted prudence of Augustus, assisted by his shrewd ministers Agrippa and Maecenas, who made Rome the centre, and obliterated all national lines of demarcation. This new Empire not only *conquered* but *captured* the people and ruled them, as the poet said, like a "mother" and not like a "queen," binding them to herself with a bond of respect and affection. She completely systematized the Empire, and ordered it from the centre outwards.

It was known that far away in the East there was a people called Indians, who had once measured swords with Alexander the Great : and there was a rumour that a people dwelt still beyond the Indians, in a land where silk grew on the leaves of trees ! But the whole civilized world, with those two exceptions, with all its races, kingdoms.

principedoms, cities, cantons and tribes, came under the rule of Rome. For the first time in the history of the world there was real peace. Men were more eager to be Romans, and bear Roman names than to shake off the Roman yoke. <sup>1</sup>“ I was free born ” (Roman citizen by birth) said St. Paul, with a touch of pride.

Rome's just and equitable laws fostered a sense of security and stimulated international credit, which is the life-blood of Commerce. There sprang up public and private banks having a common currency, so that Agrippa could borrow from a Jewish banker—Alabarck—at Alexandria in Egypt, twenty thousand drachms at  $8\frac{1}{2}\%$  and the money could be paid to him in Italy ! Banks were scattered all over Greece and the Roman world. Bills of Exchange and Bankers' Drafts were freely used. <sup>2</sup>Cicero deposited £18,000 at the Bank of Ephesus, to receive that amount at a bank at Rome. It is probable that the Collections St. Paul made in various places, on behalf of the poorer Christians in Jerusalem, were not conveyed in coin, but in bank drafts. At Oxyrhynchus there were such companies as Theon & Co., Herodes & Co., and a considerable amount of banking was done in the Temples, as in the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, and the Temple at Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup>

There was a scale of interest fixed from time to time

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxii., 25, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Anabasis book v. iii., p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus B.T. book vi., 5, p. 2.

by the Government, so there was no excuse for the unfaithful servant to wrap up the pound of his master in a napkin.<sup>1</sup>

In order to consolidate and unify the Roman Empire, Census was taken periodically for revenue purposes, to note the fluctuation of the people. At such times not only the head of the household, but all the family had to return to their tribal home and enrol themselves.<sup>2</sup> The magistrate of Mesembria in Thrace, summoned the whole population to come into the town to be enrolled, according to the law and custom of the city. This numbering of the people, according to a large number of papyri inscriptions discovered in Egypt, was held every fourteen years, and the custom continued until the 3rd Century. <sup>3</sup>The Census mentioned by St. Luke was the first one under Cyrenius, and both Joseph and Mary had to go to their own tribal home, Bethlehem. Inter-communication by road and sea was now well established. All roads led to and from Rome. The Romans were proverbially road makers, and during their rule in Britain they constructed many, parts of some still remain—Watling St., Ermyrn St., etc. The great main road from Mesopotamia passed near Damascus by the East of Jordan, to the Sea of Galilee, where one branch went toward the Dead Sea, and another through Galilee, Nazareth, Cæsarea, Joppa and Gaza, to Egypt, a third branch running from Joppa to Jerusalem, Bethle-

<sup>1</sup> Luke xix., 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ramsay N.T. Discoveries, 264.

<sup>3</sup> Luke ii., 2, 3.

hem and Hebron. It was easy therefore for the Holy Family to go to Bethlehem and thence to Egypt. In A.D. 20 there were officers called Curator Viarum, who supervised repairs, etc., to the roads, and kept them free of brigands. The facilities and safety of travelling made the Romans regular tourists. Many interesting sites of Asia Minor, especially Troy, were visited, and places like sunny Rhodes, and Mitylene, were frequented. There were still parts, as in the Judæan gorges, where one might fall among thieves, as the man going from Jerusalem to Jericho did, and also in the plateaus of Mount Taurus there were bands of robbers. We have the letter of a pig merchant from Fayum, about the 2nd Century—"Yesterday, 19th of Thoth, we were returning from the village Theadelphia, when certain malefactors came upon us. . . bound us and assaulted us with many stripes, and wounded Pasion and robbed us of a pig."

Ships plied their way in the Mediterranean Sea, which became the swiftest highway of the civilized world: the ships were primitive but of a good size. Josephus tells us of one being wrecked on a voyage from Palestine to Italy, with 600 passengers on board. Warships carried 1,000 troops, and cargo ships, freights of 150 and 250 tons weight. The average speed was 7 knots. Pliny mentions 9 days as a record passage of a ship from Alexandria to Puteoli (Italy). Pictures of ships at this era are common at such places as Herculaneum and Pompeii. The galleys



of Ptolemy Philopater measured 420ft. by 57ft. <sup>1</sup>A vivid description of a ship comes from Syria, from one who was born fifty years after St. Paul's shipwreck. It is of an Alexandrian corn ship (similar to that on which St. Paul sailed) ; it speaks of the long rising sweep of the prow, and especially notices the signs of her name Isis on either side ; her sails of scarlet, and her crew like a small army. This reminds us of St. Paul's ship, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.<sup>2</sup> There were regular sea routes kept free of pirates.

The Mediterranean became a Roman lake ! There were forts on the Black Sea, in Britain and Ireland, and as far as the Baltic Sea. Rome was itself connected with extensive harbours, with commodious docks. Silk was brought from China, amber from the Baltic provinces, hides from Germany, and merchandise from India and Arabia.

The Greeks and Phœnicians were the sailors of antiquity, they were those " who go down to the sea in ships, and occupy themselves in great waters." But now Rome becomes a naval power, the Book of Revelation represents Rome as the city whose ships cover the Mediterranean, " Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness."<sup>3</sup>

Jewish pilgrims could come from every part of the world to Jerusalem, especially at Passover time, when Josephus estimates they numbered about two million, and could

<sup>1</sup> Biblical World, xxxiv., 339.      <sup>2</sup> Acts xxviii., 11.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xviii., 19.

take back with them the story of the Cross ; and relate the wonderful happenings on the day of Pentecost, when many of them witnessed the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit.

As the armies of Cæsar marched along the paved imperial high roads, to consolidate the world for Cæsar, so St. Paul and his co-workers travelled along these same roads, to claim the world for Christ, and to plant His standard in many centres of ancient cities, towns and villages. The results were marvellous in such a short time, "so mightily grew the Word of God," and believers were added to the Church daily in many places. Though they were scattered all about the Empire, there was wonderful unity amongst them, they were not a Church but a Family, and they were called the Household of Faith. In the newly-discovered "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" we have their prayer, "As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, and being gathered together became one—so may the Church be gathered together . . . and become one."<sup>1</sup> The believers in the Apostolic Church were in very deed true brothers : it was their custom when travelling to seek out fellow Christians in the various towns and villages through which they passed, and thus to preserve the spirit of unity. Hospitality for these brethren was highly esteemed, and inculcated, as the taverns were not places of good repute.<sup>2</sup> As well as these travellers of the

<sup>1</sup> De Didache ix.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xvi., 17; Heb. xiii., 23; 3 John, 6; Rom. xii., 13; Heb. xiii., 2.

Household of Faith, there were regular itinerant missionaries ; such were the apostles, prophets and teachers.

Besides the advantages of easy travelling in the 1st Century, there were Postal facilities ; though there was no postal system such as we have to-day, there were certain firms of merchants who made it a part of their business to carry letters. Also there were private letter carriers, such as Ephaphroditus, Tychicus and Silas : and besides them, there were Imperial messengers, who in times of urgency, could travel from 150 to 200 miles a day in relays, and could sometimes be prevailed upon to carry private letters.

As the Imperial missives went forth to all the provinces, so the message of the King of Kings penetrated the Roman Empire. Letters to the various Churches were written by the leader of the Church, to keep them in touch with the central body, and also to give instructions, and edify them. A Circular letter was often written, to be passed from one congregation to another. St. Paul directs that the epistle to the Colossians be read in the neighbouring Church of Laodicæa, and that to the Laodiceans, be read to the Church of Colosse. The Epistle to the Galatians was designed for the whole province of Galatia. That to the Ephesians, was also a circular letter to the churches in the whole of Asia. Even in the 2nd Century, the Philippians requested St. Polycarp to forward them copies of the Epistles of Ignatius, that they might be edified by their

perusal. Hermas was directed in a vision by St. Clement, not only to read his book to the Church of Rome, but also to send copies of it to other cities, that all might read it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hermas Vision ii., 4.

## CHAPTER III

### The Administration of the Provinces

SOME of the Provinces of the Roman Empire were ruled by petty kings under vassalage to Rome. Others enjoyed nominal independence, but by far the greater number were divided into two—the Imperial and the Senatorial—Provinces. Those which required the presence of a military force were ‘imperial,’ as the Emperor was the chief of the Army and Navy. So while Cyprus, without a garrison, was a senatorial Province governed by a Pro-Consul representing the Senate, Judæa and Syria were Imperial provinces garrisoned by Roman Soldiers, and ruled by an officer who represented the Emperor. Syria, a first-class province, was under a Legatus; Judæa, a second-class province, was governed by a Procurator. St. Luke, in his history, carefully and correctly observes these various officers in their respective provinces, Imperial or Senatorial.

One of the chief functions of the Procurator, or Governor, of Judæa, was to superintend military matters. Part of the army consisted of Italian Legionaries, drawn mostly from Rome and Italy, and part of Auxiliaries recruited

from the Provinces. Jews were exempted from serving as they could not serve under the Eagle—the Roman Standard.

There were ten cohorts or bands in a legion, which was composed of Cavalry and Infantry, and numbered from six to seven thousand men. Five cohorts were stationed at Cæsarea, the Headquarters of the Governor. One cohort was stationed at Jerusalem in the barracks adjoining the Antonia Fortress, to the N.E. of the Temple, with which they were connected by steps.<sup>1</sup> At the time of great festivals, this cohort was augmented by troops from Cæsarea. When there was an uproar in the Temple, because the Jews thought St. Paul had brought in Greeks and defiled it,<sup>2</sup> the captain of the cohort came down with soldiers from the barracks and rescued him, and later on sent him down to Caesarea to the governor—accompanied by 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen.<sup>3</sup>

One of these five cohorts at Cæsarea was called the 'Italian Band,' of which Cornelius was the Captain.<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Schurer, a great authority on this period, raised an objection to the finding of any Italian Cohort at Cæsarea, but the discovery of an inscription at Carnuntum, published by Dr. Borman, proves the likelihood of the accuracy of St. Luke's statement, and shows there was an Italian band in Syria in those times. This inscription at Carnuntum, in Pannonia, on the South Bank of the Danube—a

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxi., 40.    <sup>2</sup> Acts xxi., 32.    <sup>3</sup> Acts xxiii., 23.    <sup>4</sup> Acts x., 1., etc.



little below Vienna, is the epitaph of a young soldier Procolus, an officer of the second Italian Band, who had been detached for special service from the Italian Band, A.D. 69 and had died there.<sup>1</sup>

Another function of the Governor of Judæa was a Fiscal one—he acted as a steward of the Emperor, receiving the Revenue of the Province for him. Judæa was divided into eleven “toparchies” or “parishes” for the purpose of collecting the poll tax or tribute money. It was paid in a silver coin, the denarius, (9½d.) to Cæsar, but there was also a tribute paid by the Jews to the Temple, in sacred money,—half a shekel per head. Hence our Saviour’s reply, “Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and to God the things which are God’s.”

Besides the Tribute—there were customs and export duties. These were not collected by the Roman Governor himself, but leased to certain lessees who were called Publicans; they were generally Roman citizens, who employed agents for the collection of these taxes; these were also called Publicani or Publicans, and were generally drawn from the lower classes of the natives of the place. Whatever excess of tribute, etc., they could collect or extort, was theirs, and their masters: this involved a great deal of corruption. These local agents or Publicans are called in Rabbanic Literature ‘sinners.’<sup>2</sup> In one

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay “Was Christ born in Bethlehem,” 260, 269.

<sup>2</sup> Nedarim iii., 4.

place it says, "one should not take alms from a tax gatherer, because his money is robbery." One of these publicans at Jericho was Zacchæus.

Our Saviour never despairs of man—he has love even for a sinner and a robber, and wins them to His Kingdom.

In Galilee the taxes were collected for Herod, for it was under his jurisdiction—and it occupied a very prominent position between countries exporting and importing goods—Arabia on the one side with its incense, salt, and balsam, and Phœnicia, the Levant and Egypt, with all their articles of luxury, on the other side.

Two of the passes between Judæa and Samaria were fortified by Herod the Great, and used as custom houses. There was a tariff regulating the tolls payable on various kinds of goods. An inscription corroborating this was found at Palmyra 150 miles N.E. of Damascus, written in the Aramaic language A.D. 270. In the Gospels we read that Levi was a publican at Capernaum, and collected for Herod. At the call of the Saviour, Levi the publican, the money-making Jew, became St. Matthew, the writer of the first Gospel of the New Testament.

The Governor of the Province also had to dispense justice according to the Roman Law. Amongst the Romans, sentence was generally pronounced from a certain place called the judgment seat, which was a tessellated pavement, either permanently fixed as in a judicial court, or portable. Julius Cæsar carried one of the latter

sort with him in his military expeditions, for use when pronouncing judicial decisions. So did Philip the Tetrarch.<sup>1</sup> In St. John's account of Christ before Pilate we read "Pilate . . . sat down in the judgment seat, in a place that is called the Pavement"<sup>2</sup> Probably this seat was connected with his official residence, Herod's Palace on Mount Zion, and not with the Prætorium, the Fortress N.E. of the Temple.

In dispensing justice, the Roman procedure was more or less followed. Counsel for the prosecution and for the defence was allowed, and we have in the papyri an account of a trial (A.D.49) with the speeches of prosecuting counsel,<sup>3</sup> which was discovered at Oxyrhynchus. It was about this time that Tertullus, an orator, went with the High Priests and Elders from Jerusalem to Cæsarea to accuse St. Paul before Felix the Roman Governor.<sup>4</sup> A Roman citizen had the right of appeal from the sentence of the governor to higher courts, and even to Cæsar; St. Paul, being a Roman citizen, made use of this privilege and appealed against a local decision, to Cæsar. A Governor could release a prisoner at times in deference to the wishes of the multitude: the proof of this is found in the papyri. Pilate thus released Barabbas to the Jewish people.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vita. Div. Jul. xlvi., Suetonius; Josephus Ant. xxviii., 4, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Jno. xix., 13.

<sup>3</sup> Milligan No. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xxiv., 1, 2.; Pliny Epis., x., 96.    <sup>5</sup> Milligan lvxxxviii.

Besides the Governor's Court of Justice, there were both social and criminal, Jewish courts in Judæa, with which the Roman Governor did not interfere, leaving justice there to be administered by the Jews themselves to their own people.<sup>1</sup> There was a Provincial Court called "The judgment," composed of seven judges. Another court was called "The Council," a local Sanhedrim composed of twenty-three members—"Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of *the judgment*, and whosoever shall say to his brother 'Raca' shall be in danger of *the Council*."<sup>2</sup> The highest court was the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, which had great authority in Judæa, but a lesser degree in Galilee, because Galilee was under Herod.<sup>3</sup> It generally sat in the Hall of Hewn Stones in the Temple rampart. It originated with the choice of 70 elders mentioned in Deut. xvii., 8—II, representing the 12 tribes of Israel. We first meet with it as the Supreme Jewish Council of the nation in B.C.200 composed of chosen aristocratic elders, presided over by the High Priest. The existence of the Sanhedrim in our Saviour's time, presupposes the presence of some at least of each of the 12 Tribes of Israel. So when the disciples were persecuted in a Judæan city, they could flee to a Galilean one.<sup>4</sup>

But none of the Jewish Courts had power to pass sen-

<sup>1</sup> Jos. Ant. iv., 8, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. Sanh., 4, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v., 22.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x., 23.

tence of death—that was the prerogative of the Roman Governor. They could not sentence the Saviour to death, but appealed to Pilate to do so.

Probably the martyrdom of Stephen was the work of the mob connived at by Pilate, whose tenure of office was at that time in jeopardy, and who was wishful of acquiring popularity with the Jews. The Sanhedrim, for the enforcing of their decisions, had a police force of their own under the Captain of the Temple,—the Commander of the Levitical Guard ; one of the duties of this force was to guard the Temple, making their round and visiting all the gates at night ; and to prevent any Gentile from entering the inner sacred enclosure, which was open to Jews only ; there were steps leading up to this Jewish Court from the Gentile or outer court, with a warning in Greek and Latin “ No foreigner is to enter within the railing, whosoever is caught, will be responsible to himself for his death which will ensue.” This inscription was discovered by Clermont-Ganneau in 1871. The right to put even a Roman to death was conceded to the Jews, should he be caught infringing this rule. They would have killed St. Paul for bringing in Trophimus, a Greek, had the case been proved.<sup>1</sup>

Another duty of the Police was the scourging of the prisoners, “ Beware of men for they will deliver you up to the Councils and they will scourge you.”<sup>2</sup> The Scourge

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxi., 28.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x., 17.

was a long strip of leather with sharp bits of bone or metal at the end. The culprit bending, the scourge was applied, thirteen strokes on each of the shoulders, and thirteen on the naked breast, making in all, thirty-nine. It often tore the flesh and occasionally caused death. The law forbade more than forty stripes, so to be on the safe side, only thirty-nine were administered.<sup>1</sup> Should the culprit be physically weak, only 18 were given him.<sup>2</sup> St. Paul says he received five times, forty stripes save one, from the Jews. Judging from this, it seems he must have been of a fairly robust constitution, to have endured the full number not only once, but five times.

When arresting Christ, the Captain of the Guard invoked the aid of the Roman soldiers, because, according to the Traditional Law, Jews could not carry arms on Passover night, and they deemed it dangerous to arrest a popular man without them. But they had no scruple in calling on the Romans to come with their arms. As the Roman soldiers may not have been familiar with the figure of Christ, a guide was needed to point out their victim to them. Judas played that role, and gave them a sign "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He."<sup>3</sup> The kiss that Judas gave, was a native salutation—the salutation of a familiar friend. A servant would only touch the hem of the garment, or bow in great respect before him: but Judas approaches as a familiar friend, and putting both

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxv., 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cor. xi., 24.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvi., 48.



his arms round Him, kisses Him on His right cheek. Judging by the Greek work 'katafilieo' he held Him in that position for a time, to secure His arrest. Here come our Saviour's scathing words, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?"

### IMPERIAL WORSHIP.

The need arose of a Force which would transcend all material and religious distinctions, foster patriotism, and consolidate and unify the Empire under the Emperor. For neither the Empire nor the Emperor had any hoary antiquity behind them which might have inspired the love and devotion of subject nations. To supply this lack, the Emperor was deified and made the head, and object, of worship. So the Roman religion became the needed unifying force, and proved a most effective bond. Emperor worship was not a strange idea to the Romans, though not so well known as among the Greeks. Though the gods of the Romans were originally the same as those of other Aryan races, yet Roman genius with Social and Political life as its main object, had laboured earnestly to raise the religion of nature to a higher standard, and make it a moral force.<sup>1</sup> Thus the nature meaning of those gods vanished, and they became the invisible sovereigns of the Roman State. 'Fides' became a protector of honour in public life. Sermo Sanctus a protector, or god, of the sanctity of oaths. Jupiter Capitolinus represented the

<sup>1</sup> "Science of Religion," p. 155, Max Muller.

majesty of the state, and was the central idea of the Roman religion. The deification of Cæsar was but a development of this idea.

With the establishment of the Monarchy, the monarch had as good a claim to be worshipped as Jupiter Capitolinus, who, after all, had never been anything but a mere genius of the Republic, the invisible head of the State; but Cæsar was the visible embodiment of its majesty.

The Priesthood were willing to confer upon Gaius Octavianus the name Augustus, which was a secret name amongst the Priests, only applied to sacred objects and shrines, but it was now conferred upon the Emperor. Death did not impair his divine genius, but rather augmented it, for after death he joined a number of the 'Lares,' and as 'Penates' he watched over the safety and welfare of the State. At the funeral of Augustus, an eagle was liberated to represent visibly the soul of the Emperor flying to heaven, and a Senator was found who declared that he had seen the actual Emperor ascend.<sup>1</sup>

So the weal and woe of the realm were closely connected with the Emperor, and his worship became well established.

This Emperor cult was specially welcomed by the provinces in the East, as well as by the others: the idea was not a new one to them, it had been practised from time immemorial by the people of Babylonia, Persia and China. It was customary to call the ruler 'Son of God.'

<sup>1</sup> Suet., Aug. 100.

When Herod gave his oration, the people gave a shout saying, "It is the voice of a god and not of a man."<sup>1</sup>

There comes an inscription from Halicarnassus dating far back, 306 B.C., calling Ptolemy I., saviour and god. The infamous Antiochus IV. had on his coins the inscription "God who appeared among men" (meaning himself). Asia Minor became a regular hot-bed of the cultists. Asiarchs organised this state religion, and represented the Emperor as a deity, incarnate in human form. The first temple in his honour was built in Pergamos; this is probably referred to as 'Satan's seat' by St. John in his letter to Pergamos.<sup>2</sup> A priesthood and choir were inaugurated to carry out his worship with due ceremony.

At Thera, an altar was discovered dedicated to 'The Almighty Cæsar, the son of god.'

Cities vied with each other in the erection of temples and the spreading of the cult: it was a privilege to be allowed to build a temple. The citizens of Smyrna applied to Rome for permission to build a Temple, on the ground of their faithfulness to her.

This Emperor worship did not oust other gods and religions, but only required to hold the first place in veneration. The Jews were the only nation exempt from any form of Emperor worship: the one attempt to impose it on them was in A.D. 39-41, when Caligula proposed the erection of his statue in the Temple in Jerusalem, which

<sup>1</sup> Acts xii., 22.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. ii., 13.

proposition was prudently averted by Patronius the governor ; and subsequently the murder of the Emperor removed the danger.

Christians were at first identified with the Jews, and enjoyed the same privilege of exemption with them ; so St. Paul was not confronted with any opposition from the state religion, but only met with it from the Jews and the Judaistic party in the Apostolic Church. He is protected by Roman governors, and inculcates loyalty to the Rulers, who "are not a terror to good works but to the evil . . . for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."<sup>1</sup>

Later on as the Christian Church grew, it became distinct from the Jews, and then Emperor worship became incumbent upon it, as upon other people. So towards the end of the 1st Century the Church came into deadly conflict with Rome. A great persecution ensued, especially in Asia, where religion to the Oriental mind, is Faith and Fight, as in the propagation of Mahommedanism, when conquered nations were offered their sacred book the Koran, or the Sword !

Rome had no objection to the Christians serving Christ as long as they also worshipped Cæsar—but Christians could not serve two masters : and when the martyrs at the place of execution were called upon to own Cæsar lord, their reply was, they knew no other Lord save Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiii., 1—6.

This test was synonymous with that of loyalty, and Christians soon found themselves in the position of outlaws.

Christians were also socially ostracised. In those days there were numbers of guilds, and clubs—they were a recognised feature of civic and social life. They met under the auspices of a pagan god, or of Imperial worship, and partook of an evening feast, which often led to the practice of heathen orgies. We have an invitation to one of these with these words, Antonius son of Ptolemaeus, invites you to dine with him at the table of the lord Serapis in the house of Claudius Serapean, on the 6th inst., at 9 o'clock.<sup>1</sup>

It was impossible for a Christian to accept such an invitation and dine at the table of the lord Serapis! "They cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils, they cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table and of the table of devils."<sup>2</sup> St. Paul is here actually contrasting the Table of the Lord and the table of pagan worship. According to the ancient idea, those who ate and drank together, by the very act were tied to one another by a bond of fellowship and obligation, and also entered into communion with the deity under whose auspices they met. How revolting it was then to pass from the Holy Table of the Lord, to the orgies of pagan feasts in fellowship with a pagan god!

But the commercial sufferings of the Christians were

<sup>1</sup> Milligan Greek Papyri, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x., 21.

more inconvenient than those they experienced socially. In the market each devotee of the Emperor had a distinguishing mark, by which he was enabled to buy and sell—Christians would not touch this mark, as we shall see presently, and thus they were prevented from trading. “No man may buy and sell save he that hath the mark of the name of the beast or the number of his name. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred three score and six.”<sup>1</sup> Recent discoveries in Pompeii and Pergamos have thrown much light on the ‘number’ and ‘name’ referred to here. Asogliano, an Italian writer, has recently published some ‘wall scribbling’ discovered in Pompeii, not later than 79 A.D. These ‘graffiti,’ or inscriptions, are in numbers. For example: “Amerimus thought upon his lady Harmonia for good, the number of her honourable name is 45.” “I love her whose number is 545.” In both cases the name of the person is included in the number, so that to know the number is to know the name.

It is interesting to know that one of these marks, three times the size of a *id.* stamp, was discovered at Pergamos, by Germans, and is now in Berlin Museum. Prof. Deissmann, a German, believes the number 666 to be equal to ‘Cæsar god.’ A Sibylline oracle had the number 888 representing Christ, as a set off against the number of

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii.



the beast 666. Christians were advised to know the number of the beast so that they might avoid it as it involved the confession of the deity of Cæsar.

We are here, in the midst of a conflict, between the Imperial cult and the Church.

A great part of the Book of the Revelation was written at this period ; it is full of counsel and consolation for the Church, urging patience and endurance, and the putting of its trust in Christ, Who has greater power than the Emperor. The language and imagery of the Book, whether referring to the events of the moment, or predicting the future, becomes more manifest in view of the said conflict. Take only for example the letter written to the Church at Pergamos—which was the capital of the Roman province in Asia, whose governor had the privilege of having as his insignia, the Roman sword of justice. Over against this power, Christ is represented as possessing the two-edged sword, a greater authority and power. It was here, in the year B.C.29, that the first Temple was erected for the worship of the divine Augustus. There was another temple to the goddess Roma, a throne-like altar to Zeus, and side by side with these was an altar for the worship of Æsculapius, whose favourite symbol was a serpent. Pergamos was well described as the throne of Satan.

It was here many Christians, amongst whom was Antipas, suffered martyrdom. An inscription bearing the name Antipas, dating from about the 3rd Century, was discovered

at Pergamos. Christ promises "a new name on a white stone" to the victors of this Church. This again has a reference to the new and secret name, known only to the priests, and conferred by them upon Octavianus, who thereby was identified with divinity. There was a widely-spread belief in the ancient world, that to know the secret and particular name of a deity, brought one into closer fellowship with that god, and conferred upon one divine power. So Christ promised to the victors of Pergamos church "a new name which no man knoweth except he that receiveth," thereby assuring them of a closer fellowship, and of His help and power.

#### SOME ANCIENT CUSTOMS IN THE ROMAN WORLD.

If we look at some of the customs of the ancient world, we shall find that they greatly illustrate the teaching of the New Testament. Take first of all the custom of

#### TARIFF.

We have the earliest record of a "*Tariff*" in that of Diocletian A.D. 300 discovered in 1899 and published in an Athenian journal, when the maximum price of no less than seven hundred articles was fixed; for example a bushel of wheat in those days was 13/-. Beef less than 2d. a lb. Game, poultry, and fish had fixed prices. Blackbirds, thrushes and sparrows were used for human food, as they are to-day in Turkey. Sparrows

were the commonest and cheapest of all—these were sold as witnessed by many inscriptions, in packages of ten, five and two. Whereas one could buy five for a certain sum, one could only obtain two for half that amount. As St. Matthew rightly says, two sparrows are sold for a farthing,<sup>1</sup> a brass Roman coin, so St. Luke mentions five sparrows being sold for two farthings.<sup>2</sup> Very probably our Saviour noticed the selling of these sparrows in the market place, and may have seen some poor woman hesitating whether to buy the two for  $\frac{1}{2}$ d., or to get the five for two farthings. But possibly the teaching which our Saviour chiefly wished to illustrate by the sale of the sparrows, was that we should put absolute faith in God's providence. The most worthless and the meanest creature cannot drop out of existence unobserved by an all-knowing and loving Father ; thereby He brings out the worth of man to God ; if He care for the meanest creature, how much more for man, His highest creation !

### THE PRODIGAL SON.

Next let us take the story of *the Prodigal Son*. Recently a large Collection of Babylonian Tablets, which had been buried for nearly 4,000 years, and were impregnated with salt and the dust of many centuries, was secured for Yale Univeristy. After laborious cleaning and deciphering

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x., 29.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xii., 6.

the record of an old custom emerged.<sup>1</sup> Like many other Oriental customs, it was probably still a prevalent one in the time of our Lord. A son, during his father's lifetime, could not only ask for, but could *demand* his portion of the inheritance, and would then on receipt of his share, have no further legal claim on his father's property : moreover, legally he was described as 'dead,' meaning that as a *dead* man has no power to claim anything from a living person, so a son, having *received* his portion, had no longer any legal claim upon his father.

In the story of the Prodigal Son in St. Luke's Gospel,<sup>2</sup> in conformity with this old Semitic law, we find a son demanding his portion of goods in his father's lifetime, and leaving home. The Prodigal, on his return, makes no claim on his father, and the father speaks of him to his elder son as 'dead' : and out of free grace his father receives him as a son, though he has no legal claim. In those days there was a very great temptation to young men living in Judæa and Galilee in the proximity of the ten Greek cities called Decapolis on the other side of the Jordan, with their theatres and luxurious palaces ; which cities, though the centres of Hellenic culture, yet abounded in worldliness and dissipation. There is no doubt, but that many a young man would be tempted thither to his ruin. To-day we learn of many instances of youths, brought up in a simple country home in Galilee, attracted to these cities and

<sup>1</sup> A. T. Clay, Expository Times, Oct. 1915., p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xv.

living a dissolute life : and many of them were reduced to abject poverty and misery.

From the Prodigal's occupation of feeding the swine, we know it must have been so in his case, and that those Greek cities were his 'far country.' His extremity is explained by his desiring to feed on the 'husks,' which word appears in many inscriptions, as meaning refuse, or rubbish.

We have a letter from such a prodigal written in the 2nd Century, found at Fayum and now in the Berlin Museum. This letter is from Antonius Longus to his mother Nilus—"Antonius Longus to Nilus his mother, many greetings and I continually pray that thou art in health. I make supplication for thee daily to the Lord Serapis. I would that thou shouldest realise I am ashamed to come to Caranis because I walk in rags, I write to thee that I am naked, I beseech thee mother, be reconciled to me. I know that I have brought this upon myself. I have been chastened every day. I know that I have sinned, I beseech thee . . ." The letter is broken here, and we have not the other portion, but we can see from this that the man is utterly desolate, and that he knows that it is his own fault.

#### THE CANCELLING OF BONDS.

There are a number of Papyri, purporting to be 'Bonds,' or 'Handwritings'; which may now be seen in Berlin

and other museums. Sometimes the debtor wrote the bond himself, in that case he said, "I have written with my own hand" hence the term 'handwriting.' St. Paul writing to Philemon says,<sup>1</sup> "If he hath wronged thee or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account, I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it." If the debtor could not write, someone else wrote for him.

One of the bonds of the 1st Century comes from Fayum and contains the following remark: "A certain man named Papaus says he wrote it for him" (i.e., for the debtor). Many of these bonds have the Greek letter in the shape of a cross on them, which cancelled the bond; this is called the *chiadzo*, or, putting the cross on the bond. St. Paul uses this as an illustration:<sup>2</sup> "Having blotted out the handwriting that was against us nailing it to the cross." There was a bond, and the law had a claim against us, and we could not meet its claim, but the Saviour put His own cross over it, thus cancelling the law's demand once for all, removing it permanently.

#### MANUMISM, OR LIBERATION OF SLAVES.

Slaves could buy their freedom by depositing their savings in the Temple Treasury. When a recognised sum was reached the slave brought her master to the Temple, that the god of the Temple might redeem her, by paying him the purchase money (which she had previously deposited

<sup>1</sup> Phil. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Col. ii., 14.



there from time to time) out of the Temple Treasury. That money, through having been deposited in the Treasury, was looked upon as belonging to the *god*, and when the god paid her ransom she was regarded as the *god's servant*.

An inscription on the walls of Delphi B.C. 200 speaks of "Apollo Pythian buying from Socibius of Amphisea, for freedom, a female slave whose name was Nicea, by race a Roman, price paid  $3\frac{1}{2}$  minae." We can see how easily the people would understand from this custom the higher teaching given by St. Paul. He described all men as slaves of sin, the Jews as the slaves of the law also.<sup>1</sup> "Ye were the servants (slaves) of sin." This would be thoroughly understood by slaves and slave owners, who formed the bulk of the Roman world.

The purchase money paid from the Temple Treasury was called 'Lutron' (ransom). We find in the New Testament that Christ became our "Lutron"—ransom—to secure our freedom.<sup>2</sup> "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." "The Son of Man came to give His life a 'ransom for many.'"<sup>3</sup>

Slaves, when freed by the god, were marked with the sign of that particular god. St. Paul says,<sup>4</sup> "I bear the brand on my body, the mark of Jesus." So St. Paul becomes a servant of Christ, instead of a Temple servant.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vi., 17, 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. i., 18—19.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim., ii., 6.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. vi., 17 R.V.

Many references to these marked Temple slaves are made by Herodotus.<sup>1</sup>

### ADOPTION.

The New Testament carries the imagery still further, and shows that man does not only become a servant of God by redemption, but a son by adoption. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son . . . to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

This custom of adoption was not general among the Jews, there is no mention of it in any of the Mosaic codes, nor any term corresponding to the Greek work for adoption, in the Old Testament ; but we have isolated cases—for instance, Moses was 'adopted' by the daughter of Pharaoh, and Esther by Mordecai ; Jacob adopted Ephraim and Manasseh. But all these instances occurred outside Palestine. Adoption was a well known practice in the Roman world amongst the Greeks and Romans. According to Aristotle it goes as far back as B.C.725. It is a very common word in inscriptions. Amongst the Greeks a man adopting a son had to be registered by the authorities, and a special proclamation made in the Agora (market place) that his adopted son was a genuine Athenian citizen, and had now become his own son.<sup>2</sup> From this moment

<sup>1</sup> Herod ii., 113 ; Hist. com. Gal. W. W. Ramsay, 84, 472.

<sup>2</sup> Demos xliv., 41.

the adopted son left his old home and family, and entered into the duties and privileges of his new home, and became legal heir of his 'adopted' father.

Another method was followed by the Romans—A priestly college had to give its sanction, and then the one to be adopted had to renounce all connection with his old family. The Pontifex Maximus then introduced a bill into the Roman Assembly, for the adoption to be confirmed or otherwise, by vote. Upon the passing of the bill he became the legal son (*justus filius*) of his adopted father, and laying aside his former name, he assumed that of his new father. His personal debts were all paid, and he became the heir to his father's property.

So the people of Ephesus would understand very easily about their adoption as children into the household of God. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will . . . in whom we have obtained an inheritance."<sup>1</sup> "Ye being in time past Gentiles without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant and promises having no hope, without God in the world . . . now ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the Saints and of the household of God."<sup>2</sup>

#### ADVENT.

A royal visit, especially that of a king or emperor, to

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i., 5, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii., 19.

a city, was called an Advent, and implied his personal and visible presence in the place. The Emperor Nero paid a visit to Corinth, a short time after St. Paul had been there. A coin was struck in honour of the visit, and was called an 'advent coin.'

In the New Testament, the second coming of Christ in glory, is expressed by the same Greek word 'parousia' or 'presence.' His coming was understood to be that of a visible King, majestic and glorious, attended by the heavenly host, and 'every eye shall see Him.' This event was independent of any fixed time, it was in the indefinite future. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."<sup>1</sup>

The Church eagerly looked forward to the Advent of Christ, expecting it to be at any moment, so her watchword was 'Maranatha'—the Lord cometh. One of the oldest prayers of the Church has been discovered, and runs as follows "If any is holy let him come, if not, let him repent, our Lord cometh. Amen." St. Paul says "eagerly waiting the unveiling of His majesty."<sup>2</sup> The A.V. fails to bring out the real meaning of this passage. Though the Advent of Christ was independent of any fixed *time*, yet it was dependent upon *the fulfilment of certain Divine purposes*. Our Saviour said "This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiii., 32.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor., i., 7.

then shall the end come.”<sup>1</sup> And St. Peter, addressing the Jews in Jerusalem said, “Repent ye therefore and be converted, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ . . . Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.”<sup>2</sup>

In view of the above passages, the Advent of Christ may be hastened or delayed, and this idea was held by the Jews who were contemporaries of our Saviour. They said “Should Israel repent in a day, then immediately Messiah, son of David, will come.” The same thought is expressed by St. Peter “Looking for and hastening the coming.”<sup>3</sup>

So the Church may be said to bring the day nearer when it prays “Thy kingdom come” or fulfils the command by preaching the Gospel to all nations. In the Burial Service of the Church of England we find the same thought “We beseech Thee that it may please Thee of Thy goodness to accomplish the numbers of Thine elect to hasten Thy Kingdom.”

In connection with the above we are bound to take notice of the following passages. “There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.”<sup>4</sup> This verse is really a part of the account of the Transfiguration in the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv., 14.

<sup>2</sup> Acts. iii., 19—21.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. iii., 12 R.V. marg.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xvi., 28.

17th chapter, when our Saviour appeared in His glory : originally of course, there was no break between the verse and the account following, and it referred not to His Second Advent, but to the manifestation of His glory on the mount. The Transfiguration was an anticipation or foretaste of His coming, and this fact was well understood by St. Peter, for he says in his Epistle,<sup>1</sup> " We made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and were eye witnesses of His majesty . . . when we were with Him in the holy mount." The word eye-witnesses (epoptae) is a technical one, used only once in the New Testament. The Greeks used it to denote initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries. So those whom Christ said " Shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom " were granted the special vision of His kingdom and majesty on the Mount, which initiation was not granted to the others.

Again our Saviour, in His discourse on the signs of His coming and the end of the ages says, " This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled."<sup>2</sup> At first sight the word ' generation ' may appear to refer to His contemporaries, and many scholars take it to be so ; but it is a fact that the Greeks used the word "*generation*" in their literature, in its *primary* meaning of family, or race. (Odyssey i.222 Aeschylus P . . . r . . s 9.12 Sophocles 268 etc.). Therefore it is open to us to take this

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i., 16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi., 32.



passage as referring to the Jews as a race, and not to limit it to those living at that time only.

The history of the Jewish nation for the last 2,000 years shows literal fulfilment of our Saviour's words. Though no definite time of Christ's Advent is fixed, yet its approach is heralded by certain signs ; just as the fig tree shows us that summer is near by putting out fresh leaves. So Christ says " When ye see all these things, know that He is near."

In connection with Advent we also find the mention of *Advent crowns*. A papyrus refers to artizans engaged in making such crowns in anticipation of a royal visit. According to Flinders Petrie, contributions were being collected for the presentation of a crown to a king at his advent. B.C.300.<sup>1</sup>

The Greeks used two words for a crown, *Stephanos* and *Diadema*. The latter was the ornamental headdress of a king, distinguished by its colour, and pendants of gold or jewels attached to it. This was the kind offered to a king at his advent. We see the derision our Saviour was subjected to when a diadem of thorns was offered Him ; but St. John sees Christ in His future manifestation, wearing not one, but many diadems.

The other Greek word, *Stephanos*, is never used of a kingly crown—it refers to the chaplet or wreath given by the Greeks as a reward, or a mark of victory. The

<sup>1</sup> Pap., 239.

Romans granted crowns for various achievements ; there were eight for military prowess ! The following inscription is mentioned by Prof. Sayce and was found at Antinæ : “ The famous glorious Erutheos decreed a golden crown, for he has this honour worthy of his deeds from the King.”<sup>1</sup> When our King comes He will come with His rewards for His people. “ Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me ; to every man according as his work shall be.”<sup>2</sup>

God, in the New Testament offers salvation as a<sup>3</sup> free gift,<sup>4</sup> while ‘rewards’ are earned by service. Salvation is a present possession, while rewards are a future distinction, to be given at the Coming of the Lord.

As the Romans had distinctive crowns for various work, so Christ has many crowns for the various kinds of work, done in, and for, His Name. There is the Crown of Victory, the Crown of Life, the Crown of Glory, the Crown of Righteousness, etc.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 2 Matt. x., 42 ; Luke xix., 17 ; 1 Cor. ix., 24—25.

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## CHAPTER IV

### Sites and Scenes

**B**EGINNING a tour through Palestine, one immediately becomes conscious of an atmosphere wholly religious, and almost perceives the after-glow of the Shekinah of bygone days. Despite much gross superstition, and many shallow formalities, the people are religiously disposed. Here atheism or materialism has no place. The land is overshadowed by the Divine Presence of a Supreme Ruler which pervades all. "Thou knowest my down sitting and my uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off"<sup>1</sup> . . . "Thou hast beset me behind and before and laid thine hand upon me." Still many childless Hannahs trudge bare foot to sacred shrines, asking their god for the gift of a child,—“the heritage and gift that cometh from their Lord.”

The Bedouin, the wild man of the Desert, calls his children ‘preserved ones,’ for as Christ said, “their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” The unlettered Fellahin inspecting his crop, tenderly kisses the newly-formed ear of corn, and lifts his eyes to heaven, muttering ‘El-hamdu Allah’=praise be to God, and again

<sup>1</sup>Ps. cxxxix., 2. etc.



Ancient Map of the Near East.





'Allah kerim' = God is generous. And many of these people go further to show their full gratitude, and show a desire to consecrate themselves, after receiving a great benefit ; for instance, they let their hair (which symbolizes strength and manhood) grow, and when they cut it, dedicate it at a shrine in honour of God. This is probably what St. Paul did when he shaved his head at Cenchrea.<sup>1</sup>

The language of social intercourse is tinged with religion. When taking your leave of a friend you say 'W'Allah yahfathak,' may God preserve you. When visiting a house you say 'May God's peace rest upon this house' as Christ said "When ye enter a house salute, if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it."

We also notice that these children of the East differ very much in temperament from those of the West, they exhibit a hunger for sympathy, and a childlike dependence on others in the time of great trials ; whilst in the West men bear their troubles with stoic fortitude and reserve. To show excessive sorrow, and to clamour for sympathy, would be considered a sign of unmanliness in the West, but in the East it would be regarded as a sign of friendship and filial reliance. Our Saviour in the Garden of Gethsemane, in wishing His disciples to watch with Him, and in asking His Father, if possible, to remove the cup from Him, was not showing any weakness, but was acting just as a real son of the East would act.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xviii., 18.

## ORIENTAL HOSPITALITY.

As we approach the Tents of Kedar, we are accosted by chief Yakub, who extends us a cordial welcome to his tent, saying politely, that he would be honoured by our entering his 'house of hair.' We, according to custom, make as though we would go further, and say we should indeed be honoured by accepting his invitation, but we must pass on. After a long exchange of compliments, and repetition of the invitation, he takes us by the arm and forcibly draws us into his tent. This illustrates the word of the Master when He said, "Go out into the highways and hedges and *compel* them to come in." As we enter the tent, Yakub, to show further his generous friendship, assures us that his life, his blood, the light of his eyes, are ours, thus inviting us as we should say in the West, to "Make ourselves at home."

Soon we are ranged round a tray, which is filled with all sorts of good things—meat, rice, and other delicacies, though the feast is only spoken of as eating 'bread & salt.' This meal bears a meaning which is unknown in the West,—it not only satisfies hunger, but it is a 'meal of covenant,' forming and cementing friendship and brotherhood. Any act of ingratitude, unkindness, or injury, on the part of any one of the sharers of the feast to another partaker, would be regarded as the basest of actions. A treacherous man is described as one who does not know the meaning of

bread and salt. This brings into the limelight the sort of man that Judas was.

Our host still persists in still further showing his friendship. He selects a choice piece of meat, wraps it in a morsel of bread, and pushes it into our mouth—as a sign of goodwill and love—this is “giving the sop.” Our Saviour did not only give the command, “Love your enemies,” but Himself put it into practice, by giving this last sign of goodwill and love to Judas.

Parting from one's friends is even more touching than the meal and the sop. As we get up to go, our host urges us to postpone our departure for a little time, and as we leave his tent he repeatedly says, ‘Ah! remember me!’ This is a memorable saying amongst the Arabs and is even celebrated by their poets. He means that we should remember his love, his friendship, his brotherhood, that they should remain with us as a present fact; and so came the words of the Saviour, “Do this in remembrance of Me.”

Often among most intimate friends, or when a son is taking leave of his father, the head is laid on the breast, and words of love and affection are murmured. This custom will remind us of St. John who leaned on Christ's breast at the last supper.

#### CAMP FIRE.

Darkness symbolizes trouble, death, and fear, to the

people of the East, whether they live in the cities or country. It is often described by Arab poets as the "waves of the sea oppressing with many anxieties."

When God foreshadowed to Abraham the sojourn and affliction of his descendants in Egypt, He shows him the vision of "a horror of darkness."<sup>1</sup> Natives always keep a light burning through the night; and the darkness of the wilderness or country, is relieved by a camp fire, which both keeps away swarms of mosquitoes, and warns off wild animals.

The Bible is often referred to in Holy Scripture as Honey, a sword, a lamp, and water, but St. Peter likens it to a "camp fire" in the wilderness (in the Greek), "A light (camp fire) that shineth in a dark place (wilderness) until the day dawn and the day star arise."<sup>2</sup> It is a beautiful picture. We—the pilgrims—surrounded with obscurities, mysteries, and dangers, have the sure word of prophecy, which God has given us as a camp fire until the day dawns and the morning star arises in our hearts.

The people of the Ancient East associated the Morning Star with a new Era. In Babylonian theology it symbolized a happy time. In Egypt it led the weary traveller to the fields of peace. So Christ in the New Testament is spoken of as the Morning Star, who will lead us out of our pilgrimage of night, into the resplendent day of His Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xv., 12.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Peter i., 19.

One incident of camp life which leaves an indelible memory in our minds, is the Eastern Story Teller by the camp fire. It would be impossible to adequately describe the fascination which his stories had for us. One of these men was Yusuf, who lived in Northern Syria ; he would begin his matchless story in a quiet conversational manner ; he had no precise idea of either time or numbers, as one would expect in the West ; they are immaterial to him ! What would it matter whether the hour were 9 o'clock or 12 o'clock ? When he talked of the number of the flock which the Chief of the Tribe possessed, he described them as being as many as the sand on the sea shore. Of course we knew what he meant ! Fantastic gestures illustrated his camp light story. His incessant Oriental repetition enhanced the beauty of the narrative. As he warmed to his subject, he piled parable upon parable, and soared to the heights of exquisite poetry, finally bursting into song. His choice of language was in perfect harmony with the various subjects of his story, now tragic, now comic, now serious.

We felt that should such a story as told by Yusuf appear as *literature*, many of our Western scholars would be tempted to assign it to various periods, extending over hundreds of years, and to many authors, and perhaps even to numberless redactors !

### SAND STORMS.

In this part of the world one must expect to meet with

disagreeable experiences in travelling, especially during the autumn. The hot dry wind blowing from the South and South East, is called by the Arabs Esh-Sharki. It is well described by Jeremiah in the Old Testament, "A dry wind of the high places of the desert, toward the daughter of my people, neither to fan nor to cleanse."<sup>1</sup>

Besides being hot and suffocating, it raises up clouds of sand, and produces an extraordinary atmospheric phenomenon, the light of the sun is eclipsed, or looks like a red ball. This gave rise to the figure of speech St. Peter uses when describing the tribulation preceding the coming of Christ. "Wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire and vapour of smoke, the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come."<sup>2</sup>

This hot wind, like a blast from a furnace, withers the vegetation round us, and gives us a dryness and soreness of throat. It saps all our energy, producing a feeling of lassitude and fever. The animals share its ill effects with us, and there is not much chance of journeying far until it is over, which may be in a few hours, or a few days. We gradually recover from this terrible experience and hasten on towards the higher grounds of Judæa. We see Bethlehem (Beit-lahm) high up on a grey sandstone ridge which rises to a height of 2,550 feet above sea level. As we approach, its beauty is enhanced ; terraces with vines,

<sup>1</sup> Jer. iv., 11.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii., 19—20.



pomegranates, and fig trees, wind in graceful curves round the ridge from top to bottom, and give the appearance of a beautiful amphitheatre.

### BETHLEHEM.

From one of these heights near by we catch a glimpse of the Dead Sea, shimmering at the foot of the long blue wall of the mountains of Moab. The town itself in old times, as well as now, was insignificant, but religiously of importance. "But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little amongst the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel."<sup>1</sup> So it was to be the birthplace of the Messiah (Christ) and the cradle of the Christian Church.

North East, toward Jerusalem, there lay extensive fields, with a tower called Migdol Eder (Tower of the flock), where the animals destined for sacrifice in the Temple at Jerusalem, were pastured. If any other animals strayed into these pastures<sup>2</sup>, they also were kept for sacrifice, if they fulfilled the requirements of the Levitical law, lambs being specially kept for the Paschal sacrifices.<sup>3</sup> It is a beautiful and illuminating fact that Christ the Lamb of God, was born on the very confines of these fields of sacrificial animals.

The whole sacrificial system of the Old Testament looked forward for its completion in Christ. It was the shadow and Christ was the substance.

<sup>1</sup> Micah v., 2.    <sup>2</sup> Shelal, vii., 4.    <sup>3</sup> Jer. Kid. ii., 9.

The first Christmas morning must have presented a beautiful picture, on the one hand the shadow—the group of animals destined for the Temple, on the other Christ in the manger—the reality! “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

The Shepherds who attended the flocks at Migdol Eder were not ordinary Syrian shepherds, whom the Pharisees and hierarchy despised as low caste, and to whom they would not intrust the care of the sacrificial lambs. They were Temple shepherds, whose special duty was not only the pasturing of the flock, but the guarding of them from all harm or accident, as the breaking of a limb, or any blemish, would disqualify them from being offered as a sacrifice. Probably it was also part of their duty to bring the required number of animals daily to the Temple to be sacrificed.

It was to these shepherds of the sacred flock that the message of the birth of Christ was first announced. It was as though to say “Your work of tending these sacrificial animals is drawing nigh its close! the antitype has come, there is no more need of types!”

The Hebrew race had been looking for centuries for the fulfilment of the words of the prophet, “That unto them a child should be born and a Son given of a pure Virgin.” It had been the custom amongst the Hebrews for ages, to announce the birth of a male child with the salutation “Bachara” (good tidings).

Here at last the prophecy was fulfilled, the angelic herald adopts the customary salutation " I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

We must now seek the manger to which the shepherds hastened. Was it situated in the inn of which St. Luke tells us, or in the house to which the star led the wise men ? The ancient inn, like its modern representative the " khan," was a large open courtyard into which empty rooms opened. For a small sum paid to the Khangee, travellers were allowed to lodge in these compartments. They had to bring their bedclothes, fuel, and food. The animals of the caravan, comprising those ridden by the travellers, and perhaps their families, and those carrying merchandise, tents, food, water, etc., a very mixed multitude, were all tethered in the courtyard, or in some sheltered place. When the inn was quite full, the animals' quarter was almost a pandemonium ; often a night's rest has been made impossible by their fighting, kicking, and squealing.

It would be inconceivable to find the Holy Family with the Babe in a manger, amid such surroundings. Justin Martyr, who lived only 40 miles from Bethlehem, writing in the year 150 A.D., places the manger in a grotto. In the Hebron hills, close by, there were many rock cut stables with mangers, which can still be seen. These were utilised by travellers, and it is quite probable there were such

grottos in or about Bethlehem, and that the Saviour was laid in one of these caves. But we shall more probably find the birthplace of our Saviour under the shelter of a poor man's house, a house consisting of one large room, the front part of which was allocated to the animals, with mangers made of wood or hollowed stone, filled with soft crushed straw and barley (tebn) for their food. The living room for the family was a dais or raised floor, separated by the mangers from the lower part of the room. Crushed straw forms a beautiful bed, as soft as down. Perhaps our Saviour was born in a poor man's cottage. When His earthly ministry was nearing its close, He expressed the wish to partake of His last meal with His disciples, and still having no abiding place, He sought the loan of a room for the purpose, and sent His disciples to a friend asking "Where is the guest chamber." This word "guest chamber" is only used twice in the New Testament, firstly, in referring to the manger, and secondly, now. It really means the lower part of a house, a room of little value, but this good friend would give Him nothing less than the higher or best room.

To-day one of the oldest Christian Churches is reared either upon, or near to, the spot of Christ's birthplace. When this church was being repaired in 1682, King Edward IV. supplied English oak for the roof! The grotto of the Nativity, underneath the Church, is marked by a silver

star of Greek pattern, with the inscription, "Hic de Virgini Maria Jesus Christus natus est."

Was Christ to be born in Bethlehem? Old Testament prophets, especially Micah, pointed out Bethlehem as the place. The Targum paraphrasing Micah v. 2, says—"But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee the Messiah shall come." So the Jews at that time were expecting the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem of Judæa. His birth was also pictured under the metaphor of a star, so the Targum Anklos paraphrasing Numbers xxiv., 17, says, "a king shall rise out of Israel."

Judah, in the "Testimony of Twelve Patriarchs," says "over you a star shall proceed out of Jacob, a man shall arise from thy seed like the Sun of Righteousness." The same idea was held in Arabia. We can easily see now the effect this would have on the Idumæan usurper Herod. Here the Pharisees were predicting Herod's, and his family's, loss of ruling power, at the birth of Messiah.<sup>1</sup> There the wise men from the East were actually arriving at his palace, dramatically announcing that they had themselves seen the star arising (the king) and had hastened to do homage.

### HEROD THE GREAT.

Herod the Great was no uncouth barbarian. He surrounded himself with men of letters and philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Josephus xvii., 224.

<sup>2</sup> Muller Hist. Græc iii., 50.

Nicholas of Damascus, Androniachus, Gemelus the Greek. He himself studied Art and Philosophy. Besides this he was a man of courage—he tamed the unruly Arabs, and cleared Galilee of bandits ; but he was consumed with unsatiable ambition, and his jealousy and love of power almost amounted to madness ; he would brook no rivals, however near and dear to him. His position was threatened on every side amongst his enemies ; the Pharisees despised him as a foreigner. These Hebrew Puritans detested his Hellenistic sympathies, his theatres, amphitheatres, etc., and worked to compass his fall ; so he began his reign by executing forty-five of the most prominent members of this party, and just before his death he summoned all the leaders of the Jews to Jericho, shut them in the Hippodrome with orders to his sister Salome, to have them slain upon his death, that the people's joy at his death might be turned into mourning.

There were also the members of the Maccabean family, whose power he had usurped. He had murdered his father-in-law, Hyrcanus II., and had drowned Aristobulus, the High Priest, his brother-in-law, in a bath at Jericho. As is usual in Oriental royal families his own household was full of plotting. So he strangled his own sons Alexander and Aristobulus, in Samaria, having suspected them of plotting with his enemies. Even Mariamne, his beloved wife, faithful to the last, fell under suspicion, through the jealousy of Salome, his sister, and was foully murdered.



But her loss, the remorse for the crime, the disease from which he was suffering, and the visit of the Magi, with their announcement of the birth of a king, made him still more jealous and furious, and drove him to the foulest crimes, so that the end of his reign was one long role of bloodshed and murder. It is easy to believe therefore, how he would not shrink from destroying the little ones in Bethlehem, in order that by so doing, he might rid himself, as he thought, of his new-born rival. Macrobi, a Roman writer, A.D. 400, says—When the news was brought to the Emperor Augustus that the children under 2 years of age had been slain in Syria, and that amongst them was a son of Herod himself, he remarked, “It is better to be Herod’s hune (pig) than his huion (son.)”<sup>1</sup>

We will now leave Bethlehem and wend our way to Jerusalem, which is only five miles distant. Journeying northwards through the terraced vineyards and olive yards, we pass by Rachel’s tomb on the left hand side of the road, with its beautiful white dome, to which Jews made pilgrimages. The aqueduct conveying water to Jerusalem runs alongside our road, and after a short journey we reach the South Eastern corner of the city.

### JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem, famous for its archaic associations, the city of Melchizedec, and of the dim ages, was well named by

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay “Was Christ born in Bethlehem.”

its earliest inhabitants, the Amorites, "Uru-salemu," the safe city. The Hittites later on called it Jebus (yebus), a strong abode. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, was Mount Zion. If these words could be used for her in her humble days, how much more truly so in the days of the Son of Man. Zion, an Akkadian word signifying a palace, rightly describes her, for she was a city full of palaces, embellished as a bride adorned for her husband. A stranger coming up to Jerusalem, situated as she was 2,500 feet above the Mediterranean, would be enthralled when her beauty burst upon him : a city with magnificent marble and cedar covered palaces, a spacious theatre and hippodrome, and her sanctuary of marble and gold glittering in the sunlight. Jerusalem was not only glorious for her age and splendour, but she was, par excellence, a " holy city."

The city had possessed a shrine from time immemorial : the Temple mound, now known as the site of the Mosque of Omar, dates back to the cave dwellers. Some 3,400 years ago, Ebed-khebe, king of Jerusalem, when writing to the king of Egypt for help, during the invasion of the Israelites under Joshua, refers to the city as the place of the holy shrine. She is today known throughout the Mahommedan world as —El-mukkaddas— the holy place, crowned with the sanctity of Jehovah, illuminated by the brightness of His glory, trodden by the feet of kings and prophets, and hallowed by the sacred presence of the Son

of God. But the city of the Gospel, after many sieges and destructions, lies buried under a *dèbris* varying from 40 to 70 feet. As a matter of fact the city, unlike any other since the time of Melchizedec has stood no less than twenty-seven sieges, twice having been rased to the ground, and in the words of the prophet, Jeremiah, built again upon her own heap,<sup>1</sup> and there are today some seven or eight cities buried under each other.

It has been the work of Archæology to discover the Jerusalem of the Gospel. The work has been one of great difficulty, as much of the modern city was occupied by sacred buildings, and the excavator was not allowed to disturb that part. Where even work was practicable, it was systematically hindered by the Turkish government. But despite all this, Archæology has brought before us the greater part of the city of the Gospel, which justifies the remark of Walter Besant, the Hon. Secretary of the Survey Fund, "Our researches, one says with pardonable pride, have restored the Holy City, a city provided with a magnificent water supply, glorious with its palaces, its gardens, its citadel, its castle, its villas. It is a great town we have restored, not a commercial town, but a great religious centre, to which at the Passover season more than two million brought their offerings."<sup>2</sup>

It is to this restored city we betake ourselves and in a measure follow in the footsteps of the Master, and re-study

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xxx., 18.

<sup>2</sup> "City & the land" p. 118.

some portions of the Gospel story. Passing through the King's gardens, we come to the fountain gate in the south wall, the wall of Hezekiah,<sup>1</sup> excavated by Dr. Bliss. Gates in olden days acquired great importance, because they were used as Courts of Justice, and were therefore synonymous with government and power. When Jacob saw, in his vision, angels ascending and descending, he supposed the place to be the gate (or court) of heaven. So our Saviour speaking of the future of the Church predicts that the "gates" of hell, that is the power and dominion of hell, should not prevail against her.<sup>2</sup>

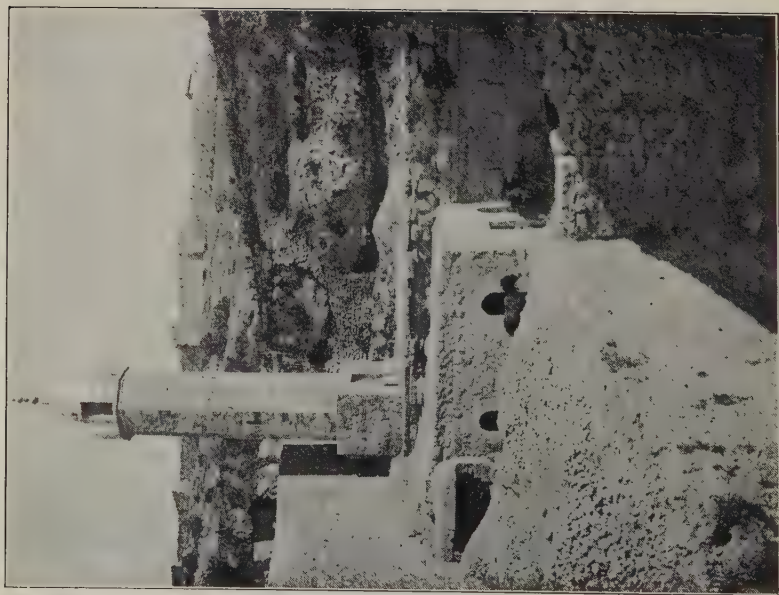
There is a narrow gate for foot passengers beside the large city gate, which some take to be the "eye" of the needle, and assume that our Saviour referred to this when He said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."<sup>3</sup> But there is no evidence that the small gate was ever called the eye of the needle. It was a proverbial saying in our Saviour's time, and referred to the eye of an ordinary needle, and was used to describe anything impossible or incredible. Rabbi Shesheth said to Rabbi Aamaran, when the latter sought to convince him of something impossible, "Perhaps you are from Pumbditta where they can drive an elephant through the eye of a needle," : and again, "No one ever saw a golden palm or an elephant go through the eye of a needle." The Koran makes use of

<sup>1</sup> Neh. iii., 15.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xvi., 18.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xi., 24.





Pool of Siloam.



Entrance to Tunnel.



this expression in one of the purest classical Arabic passages, the term employed is "sum-el-Khiat," and can only mean a sewing needle. The point of our Saviour's teaching here was not the comparative, but the absolute impossibility of a rich man attaining the Kingdom by means of his riches !

#### POOL OF SILOAM.

Passing through the Fountain Gate, we come to the Pool of Siloam (Birket-silwan), which was within the wall of Hezekiah. Josephus places it at the mouth of the Tyropean Valley, on the Southern slope of the Temple area. Its dimensions were probably  $75 \times 71$  feet. A tunnel, one third of a mile, brought the water from the Virgin's Pool, which was outside the wall. This spring rose in a small cave, and no doubt Hezekiah, fearing a siege by Sennacherib, constructed the tunnel either to supply the city with water, or to prevent the enemy from obtaining it. In the year 1880, some boys playing truant from the London Jews' Society's School at Jerusalem, while clambering about the Siloam Pool, discovered an inscription at the opening of the Tunnel into the Pool, giving the description of the Aqueduct in the oldest Hebrew language ever discovered.

The water of the Pool is intermittent, as its source, the Virgin's Pool is dependent upon the rains. In the rainy season it flows twice a day, and in the dry season once in two days.

Dr. Bliss discovered a paved Roman road leading from

this Pool, up the slope, to the Temple area. Evidently it would have been along this road, that the blind man was sent by Christ to wash in the Pool of Siloam. The Evangelist adds significantly, that the Pool "by interpretation" was called "Sent." This was the very title applied by our Lord to Himself, and today this title is still borne by many religious leaders in Syria, thereby implying that their mission is from God. Moreover, the name of the Pool in Hebrew was Shiloah. Jacob used this very name with reference to our Lord when he said "The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come."<sup>1</sup> Further our Saviour saw a point of similarity between Himself and the Pool, for according to Isaiah this pool was despised by the Jews, "Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Siloam, that go softly."<sup>2</sup> They preferred more outward grandeur and show. In the same way they despised the Saviour whose coming was without pomp and majesty. When Christ sent the blind man to the Pool of Siloam to wash, He was pictorially pointing him to Himself as the true Shiloh, sent by God.

Resuming our walk along the paved Roman road we go up through the Tyropoean valley which divides the city with the Temple and its suburb in the East, from the Upper city in the West, commonly, since the 4th Century, called Zion. As we proceed, we pass on our right the palaces of Queen Helena (not St. Helena of later

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlix., 10.

<sup>2</sup> Is. viii., 6.





Ancient Fountain at Jerusalem.

date) and her son Mossabazis, who were as we have already noticed, received from heathenism into Judaism. On our left is the theatre of Herod the Great and the Greek Hippodrome and Xystus, probably a Greek gymnasium.

### MARKET.

Still proceeding up the valley, we reach the Lower Market, N. & N.E. of Zion. An eastern market (suk) was a place of great importance, as it is to-day. Though our Divine Saviour paid only seven visits to Jerusalem in His earthly ministry, he must have seen many things in the market which He used to illustrate His lessons—such as the Burden Bearer, Corn Market, Street Minstrel, and the Salutations of the people, etc.

Eastern dogs in the market remind us of one seemingly harsh saying of our Saviour. Dogs in Palestine were not so fortunate as their brothers in other lands. Judging from geological records, the dog was the first animal to ingratiate himself with man. Some African tribes worshipped him, the Persians held him in high honour, the Egyptians mummified him and gave him a decent burial. The people of New Guinea offered food to his departed spirit, but the poor dog had no citizenship in Semitic lands, especially in Palestine—his name was a term of abuse. Even to-day there is no railing epitaph worse, than calling a man a dog, or the son of a dog. Certain immoral men in the East are called 'dogs' and it is to these St. John

refers in his picture of the new Jerusalem 'without (outside) are dogs.'<sup>1</sup> Therefore it seems strange that our Saviour should by implication call a Syro-Phœnician woman a dog, until we remember the locality in which He addressed her was a Greek world in His days. He was also speaking to a Greek woman, whose love for dogs was not less than that of many women in England. The following was a common proverb among the Greeks — 'You starve yourselves, and feed dogs.' Further the word used does not mean a fullgrown dog, but a puppy. Even Jewish children made pets of puppies, and fed them with tit-bits from their table. The expression, eating the crumbs which fell from the table, was one well known among the Greeks; Philostrates, in his Life of Apollonius of Tyana, says of Damis of Nineveh, a great admirer of Apollonius and a follower of his teaching, "You are eating like dogs, which eat tit-bits from the feast." Damis answers "I do not mind, if they are the feasts of the gods." Our Saviour was not here *repelling* but *compelling* the woman's faith, and inviting her to claim the portion of the children's pet, and have her share in the Gospel feast. She catches the spirit of His remark, and claims the gift. The Saviour's pleasing commendation follows "Oh woman, great is thy faith" and her request is granted forthwith.

#### BUILDINGS.

From discoveries made at Horan, between Damascus

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxii., 15.



and Gilead, of houses in a state of perfect preservation, a very good idea can be formed of their construction in our Saviour's time. Very often, as Archæology has shown us in remains of ancient cities, houses were built hurriedly without a deep foundation to the rock beneath, having been dug; they are described as 'built on sand.' But for the proper construction of a house, four pits were dug, one at each corner of the square, until the rock beneath, or at least firm ground was reached: a large stone or rock was placed in each of these pits, and was called a *corner stone*, upon which the massive pillars which upheld the house were placed, so upon these corner stones the strength of the house depended—between these pillars a trench was dug for the foundation of the walls.

St. Peter refers to Christ as the Corner Stone; "Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." So the whole building of the Christian faith rests upon Christ, and Him alone.

The flat roofs were made of rafters covered with brush-wood, upon which earth was laid to the depth of one foot, and rolled well with a stone roller. Flat roofs were one of the principle features of the East, and were a favourite rendezvous. "That which ye have spoken in the ear in closets (bed chambers), shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops." The larger houses enclosed a roomy court, for instance that in the Palace of the High Priest on the Western

Hill, where it is called 'the Hall.' Peter warmed himself here by the fire.

To reach the roof of the one storey house there was no need of a ladder, it was easily reached by a few stone steps. It was often easier to take a heavy load into a house through the roof (where a place for the purpose was provided), which, although usually covered with earth and brushwood, could easily be uncovered when required. We have often seen this done, especially at harvest time when the harvest produce was brought in. St. Mark, describing the bringing in of the sick man to our Saviour, says, "They uncovered the roof where he was," literally 'unroofed the roof,' that is, removed the earth and brushwood from that particular spot. A big load could be taken in between the rafters in this way. When St. Luke refers to it he says "They let him down through the *tiles*." He was giving his account to Theophilus, who was either a Greek or a Roman, to whom the idea of uncovering a roof would be somewhat puzzling—so St. Luke pictures a Greek house for him, which was covered with tiles, having a hole (*implerium*) in the roof of the principle chamber (atrium) where the company would assemble, thus giving him the idea of the sick man being taken through the hole into the guest chamber.

#### HEROD'S PALACE ON MOUNT ZION.

This Palace stood by the present Joppa Gate. It had





The Cœnaculum, Supposed Chamber of the Passover.

extensive fortifications, gardens and ponds, and in the North, three famous towers, Hippicus, Phasael and Mariamne, which were completed in B.C.23. The present tower called the Tower of David is associated with that of Hippicus. In our Saviour's time this Palace was occupied by Pilate, the Roman Governor. As the residence of the Procurator it had the Gabbatha or Pavement. It was probably here and not in the Prætorium that Christ was brought for trial. Josephus tells us that Florius, another Roman Procurator, when in residence here, placed the Gabbatha in the front of the Palace.<sup>1</sup>

A little to the South of Herod's Palace stood that of Caiaphas, the High Priest, and still further South we have the spot recognised as 'The Upper Room' (coenaculum).

Epiphanes, who lived some time in Palestine, says that when Hadrian came to Jerusalem, the whole city was rased to the ground, and the Temple of God trodden down, with the exception of a few buildings, one of which was the little Church of God on the site of the Upper Room, to which the disciples had returned after the ascension of their Master.<sup>2</sup> He places it on the West Hill. A little later on Cyril, of Jerusalem, in A.D. 348, calls this Church the 'Upper Church of the Apostles.'

The Liturgy of St. James speaks of the descent of the Holy Ghost in the Upper room,—the mother of all the

<sup>2</sup> Battle of Jews, ii., 14.

<sup>1</sup> Sandy's Sacred Sites, p.p. 81, 82.

Churches—and points to this place.<sup>1</sup> The same description is given by the pilgrim Theodosius in A.D.530. It was probably destroyed by the Persians in A.D.614, and restored by Modestus a little later. Franciscans reconstructed it in A.D.1333 and it is to-day recognised by many experts, as being the 'Upper Room' of the New Testament. It is a building 50 by 30 ft. near the modern Zion gate of the city.

On the Western Hill, facing the Temple, stood the Hasmonian Palace, on the present site of the Jewish Synagogue (ashkenazi); Herod Antipas generally stayed here when he visited Jerusalem at the great Feasts. He was a son of Herod the Great, and under his father's will, became a tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. He also inherited his father's ambition and trickery, and the Talmud described him as sly, and ambitious!<sup>2</sup> Our Saviour referred to him as 'that fox'; Antipas even had designs on Judæa, and to establish a better claim to it he married Herodias, his brother's wife, of the Maccabean family. He built a city and called it Tiberias, that he might by so doing ingratiate himself with the Emperor. He was a regular visitor at Jerusalem at the Passover, and Josephus thinks he put John the Baptist to death for political reasons.<sup>3</sup> Antipas naturally was suspected by Pilate, and as the Gospel tells us, there was no friendship between them. But Pilate sent Jesus to Herod Antipas, as Galilee belonged to his

<sup>1</sup> Brightman's Liturgies, pp. 53, 54.

<sup>2</sup> Barachot, lxi., 3.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus Ant. xviii., 18; 5, 2.



jurisdiction. From that day Pilate and Herod were made friends.

### PLACE OF CRUCIFIXION.

The Jews divided the Temple and city into three camps : the Camp of Israel, Camp of Levi, and the Camp of God. *Beyond* the city walls was called 'outside the camp.' Perhaps the writer to the Hebrews had this in his mind when he spoke of our going to Christ 'without the camp,' as Christ suffered as our Sacrifice, *outside* the city wall.<sup>1</sup> There are two places indicated as the place of Crucifixion ; the one is the traditional site, occupied by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is indicated in the map of Father Cleopas in the 6th Century, and is supported by earlier traditions, such as those of Malito of Sardis A.D.180, Fermelain of Cappadocia, Origen and Jerome. Such weighty traditions cannot easily be set aside as void of any authority, but in recent years another spot has been pointed out as the place of Calvary, on the north side of the city, and known as Gordon's calvary, and this has many advocates. So it behoves us to suspend our judgment as to the real site till further confirmatory discoveries have been made.

### ROCK HEWN TOMB.

The Tombs of the kings and judges in the North of the city are the best examples of the rock hewn tomb which

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xiii., 13.

Joseph of Arimathea gave for our Saviour's burial. They were large chambers hollowed out in the rock, with ledges in the wall for the bodies, the entrance being through an aperture in the front, against which a large stone was rolled to close it. Some time ago one of these tombs was discovered in the Garden of the Dominican settlement, about 100 yards from the Damascus gate. This tomb had an oblong chamber divided into two, the inner half containing the ledge for the body. The ledge itself was hollowed out in the shape of a coffin. This kind of sepulchre was for the rich only, the poor were buried in the ordinary graves. The grave for a criminal would be dug before his execution—it is probable that at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion, there were three graves prepared, one for Him and one for each of the malefactors. But at the eleventh hour, Joseph of Arimathea intervenes, and our Lord's body consequently, was entombed in the burial place of the rich: thus literally fulfilling the words of Isaiah spoken seven hundred years before—"He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death."<sup>1</sup>

Looking up from the Tyropœan Valley towards the East, we see the Temple on Mount Moriah in all its magnificence. This was called Herod's Temple, as he had repaired and beautified the much decayed Temple of Zerubbabel. Herod took up the work partly because of his love for building, and partly to conciliate the Jews. He began the renova-

<sup>1</sup> Is. liii., 9.





The Dome of the Rock.

tion B.C.19, and promised to finish the inner Sanctuary in three years, but could not do it under eight ; indeed the whole Temple, with its courts, etc., was not completed before A.D.64. Probably our Lord had Herod's promise of three year's in mind, when He said, He would build it in *three* days, only He spake of the Temple of His Body. " Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up."<sup>1</sup>

It is a significant fact that the Jews never showed any gratitude to Herod for this magnificent work, and never mention it in any of their writings ! No doubt this attitude of the Jews explains their studied silence about our Saviour's glorious work in their time.

Herod's Temple to-day is gone, but after 3,000 years, traces of the foundation of Solomon's temple are still found. North-East of the sacred enclosure, 110ft. below the present level of the ground, the foundation stones measuring from 4ft. to 20ft., and some even 38ft. in length, can still be seen. Some of these stones are marked with Phœnician letters in red paint, and others are engraved—they are the work of Hiram's workmen, who helped Solomon in the construction of the Temple.

The outer court of Herod's Temple was famous for its unrivalled cloisters—the most celebrated one was the Royal Porch extending from the valley in the East to the West, composed of 162 gigantic Corinthian pillars of solid white marble. These were in four rows, each pillar being

<sup>1</sup> Jno. ii., 19.



37½ft. high, and between the rows was a grand promenade—45ft. wide and 100ft. high.

A few years ago a marble column was discovered in the enclosure of the Russian property in the N.W. corner of the city. It was half finished but had not been detached from the bed rock. Its length was 40ft. and its diameter 6ft. It had been left unfinished on account of a flaw in the marble. Its dimensions corresponded exactly with those in the porch. If the pinnacle of the Temple mentioned in the Temptation were the end of the Royal Porch, as some suppose, it would give us an eminence of 400ft. above the valley.

A porch facing the Mount of Olives, was used as a shelter in inclement weather, and as a place for debates, etc., as the Agora was in Athens. As St. Paul disputed in the latter with the Athenian philosophers, so our Saviour here talked with the Pharisees, Scribes and Lawyers.<sup>1</sup> It was here in Solomon's Porch that St. Peter and St. John preached 'Christ crucified.'<sup>2</sup>

### TEMPLE MARKET.

Out of the sacrificial worship of the Temple, and the required payment of the Tribute in sacred money, the need arose of a market within the Temple area, where the worshippers could procure their sacrificial animals, and exchange their money. Such a market necessarily assumed,

<sup>1</sup> John x., 33.

<sup>2</sup> Acts. iii., 19.



especially at Passover times, gigantic proportions: the money changers alone could make a profit of £9,000—a very large sum considering that the daily wage of a labourer was only 8d. This profitable business excited the cupidity of the sons and friends of the High Priest, who formed a syndicate under their control. Some Rabbis, writing in reference to this market, called it “the Bazaar of the sons of Annas”; Josephus speaks of Annas and his sons, as hoarders of money, and despoilers of the official charges of the priests. They were hated by all good-feeling Jews and are referred to in the Talmud in these words “Go hence, ye sons of Eli, ye defile the Temple of Jehovah.” A distinguished Rabbi, Abba Shaal, calls them ‘vipers.’ This is similar to the term John the Baptist used when he saw the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism.<sup>1</sup> We are also told that the sons of Annas *beat* the people with sticks. <sup>2</sup>“Woe is me because of the house of Annas . . . because of their whispering . . . they beat the poor with sticks.”

These facts were well known to our Saviour; and these sons of Annas, besides defiling the House of Jehovah, making it a den of thieves, were oppressors of the people. Christ metes out poetic justice to them, making a scourge and driving them out of the market. We hear of no retaliation on their part, owing to their great unpopularity with the mass of the people.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iii., 7.

<sup>2</sup> Pes. lvii., a.

The lambs for sacrifice had to be perfect, without any blemish : this required expert knowledge, therefore the need arose of a class of men called Numcheh, who had spent 18 months in a farm house to learn their work. These men examined the lambs brought to the Temple, and if they were fit, they sealed them, thus certifying they were without blemish. Their charge was 2d. a lamb.

How remarkable that our Saviour should enter Jerusalem on his last visit, on the very day that the lambs for sacrifice had to be brought to the Temple area ; and that He, too, should have gone to the Temple market, where the buying and sealing of the lambs was taking place. This illuminates the words of St. John " Him hath God the Father sealed." He was brought before Pilate and Caiaphas, human judges, and despite many false witnesses, they could find *no fault* in Him. His perfect Sinlessness was certified moreover by God Himself, He was the Paschal lamb Who had come to bear the sin of many.

We can well imagine that the market was crowded with lambs at the time of the Passover, for at least two million pilgrims would buy their lambs four days before the Passover. Two thousand years ago, that four days before Passover, fell on Palm Sunday. Our Saviour came on that day from Bethany to Jerusalem, and amid the flocks of Paschal lambs, entered the market place—type and anti-type side by side !

Between the court of the Gentiles and the Temple proper,

was a low wall about 4ft. high, with pillars at equal distances bearing inscriptions, some in Greek and some in Latin, forbidding any Gentile to proceed further on pain of death. One of these inscriptions on a stone tablet 3ft. long and 2ft. wide, was discovered by M. Clermont Ganneau in 1871. The wall separated the Court of the Gentiles from that of Israel, and it was this wall St. Paul had in his mind, when he said, "He is our peace Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition." The Temple proper was regarded by the Jews with the utmost reverence and every Israelite had to conduct himself with great decorum. No devout worshipper would carry in his hand a staff, or stave, or scrip. Any money for Temple offerings, had to be carried in the hand. One wonders whether this was in the mind of the Saviour when He sent His disciples to preach the Gospel and enjoined them to "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purse, neither shoes nor yet staves." That would be, 'go in the spirit of the Temple worship and be in your Father's service.'

To preserve the sanctity of the sacred edifice, it was guarded day and night by the Temple guards, more especially at night. Groups of ten Levites under the command of a captain, were placed at 24 stations to keep diligent watch. The chief captain of the guard would unexpectedly come round to see that each was doing his duty. As he passed by, each group had to arise and salute, to show that they were awake. If any were found sleeping, the captain

burned a part of his garment as evidence of his delinquency. Perhaps the following passages refer to this custom <sup>1</sup>“Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching . . . if He come in the second watch or in the third watch.” Again “Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and *keepeth his garments.*”<sup>2</sup>

The innermost part of the Sanctuary lay to the West of the Temple, and worshippers entered from the East, and during their service therefore faced the Holiest of Holies in the West. The gate by which they entered, was called ‘the Beautiful Gate’; it was constructed of dazzling Corinthian brass, richly ornamented, a symbol of beauty. Here the beggars sat and asked alms of those who entered the Sanctuary; this is still a common sight in Eastern lands at the entrance of churches and mosques.

The Gate Beautiful led into the ‘Women’s’ Court, not so designated because it was entirely for the use of women, but because they were not allowed to go in any further! In this court there were thirty chests and alms boxes in the shape of Trumpets—into one of these the poor widow cast her offering of two mites.<sup>3</sup> In this court, too, there was a cloister with fine pillars, where sat the doctors instructing the young and others, at the approach of great festivals.<sup>4</sup> It was here our Saviour, when He attended the Passover Feast at the age of twelve years, was found “sitting in the

<sup>1</sup> Luke xiii., 37—38.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xv., 16.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xii., 42.

<sup>4</sup> Jos. Wars. V.V.2.

midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."

According to the Talmud, the Women's Court had no roof, so when at the Feast of Tabernacles the four golden candelabra, each with four bowls, were lit up, the neighbouring courts and houses of the Holy City were brilliantly illuminated. This was in remembrance of the glorious light of the Shekinah, which filled the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and was a type of our Saviour. He now calls the attention of the crowd to Himself, "I am the Light of the World."<sup>1</sup>

It was on the top of the fifteen steps leading from the Court of the Women into the Court of Israel, and facing the Altar of Burnt Offering, that our Saviour was presented in the Temple, and the aged Simeon, led in by the Spirit of God, said He should "Be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel."

The Gate of Nicanor was situated between these two courts—through which, only men were allowed to enter. It was richly adorned with gold and silver; so heavy was it that it required twenty men to shut it.<sup>2</sup> This gate was presented by a Jew, Nicanor, and his family bones were discovered recently on the Mount of Olives, bearing a Greek inscription—"Nicanor Alexandress who made the gate facing the Women's Court."

Passing beyond the Court of Israel we reach the inner

<sup>1</sup> Jno. viii., 12.

<sup>2</sup> Jos. Wars. V.V.3.

part of the Sanctuary—the Holy Place, and the Holiest of Holies, separated from each other by a Veil, through which only the High Priest could enter into the Holiest of Holies, once a year, on the Day of Atonement. It was this dividing Veil which was rent from top to bottom at the time of the Crucifixion. We have here at the rending of the Veil, a supreme revelation.

*Firstly*, that the Sacrificial System is on the wane, that by the death of Christ all the laws and sacrifices of the Levitical Priesthood had been fulfilled. As the Antitype increases, the type decreases. Even the sacerdotal garments of the High Priest were kept by the Gentile Governor at the Tower of Antonia, who only *lent* them to him at the Festival when he chose to do so. Now the Holiest of Holies is seen shorn of all its glory, very different from what it was in the Temple of Solomon. There was no Ark of the Covenant, no Mercy Seat and no Shekinah, only a square stone which is called in the Talmud the 'stone of foundation'; these things plainly indicated that these types and shadows were now being fulfilled in Christ, the Substance and Antitype.

*Secondly*, that there is free access to the Presence of God. The Tabernacle and Temple taught how sinful man could approach the presence of God, and have fellowship with Him. It was by the Altar of Sacrifice, the cleansing water of the Laver, and the mediation of the Priesthood. Now the rent veil indicated that Christ had fulfilled all





Mosaic Work and Clerestory Windows



Arcade at top of Stairs on Site of Holy of Holies.





The Golden Gate from the East.



Interior of the Golden Gate.

these by the sacrifice of Himself, made once for all, and had opened the way to the presence of God to all believers, becoming the one Mediator between God and man. "Having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated (inaugurated) for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh." <sup>1</sup>

### GETHSEMANE.

Leaving the Holy City through the Golden Gate on the East side we descend to the brook Cedron, which is generally dry, excepting in the rainy season; a bridge spans the brook opposite the Golden Gate, across which is an enclosure of about an acre of ground, with some eight gnarled olive trees; this is regarded by the Latin Church as the 'Garden of Gethsemane' of the Gospels, although it does not admit of the privacy sought by our Saviour on that memorable night, as it lies near the junction of several roads, and would be very noisy at Passover time.

Professor Rendall Harris suggests that the true site lies a quarter of a mile north of the traditional garden, where the ruins of an ancient oil press have been discovered, surrounded with an olive grove. Olive presses in Palestine were generally permanent structures, with rock-hewn vat, and heavy roller. The garden would of course take its name from the olive press, which is in Hebrew 'Gethsemane.'

<sup>1</sup> Heb. x., 19—20.

An organic unity between the Old and New Testament is suggested by this garden. We find the first garden in Genesis iii., 18, where God promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, and the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's seed. Ages rolled away, and here we find our Saviour, the seed of the woman, in a garden called Gethsemane—the olive press—there, we are told, He was 'in an agony'—more graphically in the Greek, in a 'hand-to-hand combat,' and the words of the prophet Isaiah are echoed "He was bruised (in the wine press) for our iniquities."<sup>1</sup>

The sepulchre destined to hold the sacred body was also in a garden; as was the scene of His Resurrection and victory over Death. Surely it was not accidental, that His first words were addressed to a woman, "Woman why weepest thou?" The promise made to a woman in a garden, ages before, had its fulfilment announced to a woman in a garden by the seed of a woman. This incident besides suggesting the vital unity between the Old and New Testament, offers us one of the greatest proofs of Christ's resurrection, for no Eastern writer, either in ancient or modern times, would assign the Saviour's first appearance after His resurrection *to a woman*, had it not been a genuine fact. An Eastern forger would have mentioned it as being to St. Peter, St. John or even to Joseph of Arimathea.

<sup>1</sup> Is. liii., 4.



## MOUNT OF OLIVES.

This mountain lying to the East of Jerusalem has an average height of 2,664ft. with three distinctly marked rounded summits. The highest of these summits is the one lying to the West, which is 2,686ft. high, and is called 'scopos' (the watchman). It was called in Hebrew, Barhutz-trzophim—the mount of the watchman. The highest summit of the mountain is 259ft. above the Temple area, and 170ft. above that of the upper city. Standing on this spot we get a fine panorama. Looking towards the South, one sees Hebron the city of Abraham : far away South West stretch the waters of the Dead Sea : looking to the North and North-East are the mountains of Moab. But it is the sight of the Jerusalem of 2,000 years ago which attracts our attention. Immediately in front of us is the Temple in all its glory : on its North-West angle stands the Tower of Antonia, the great fortress as described by Tacitus. It was called Boris in the time of the Maccabees. Looking south of the Temple, are the grand palaces of Helena and her son. Beyond the Temple to the West, was the Greek theatre, and the Greek Hippodrome and Gymnasium, the symbol of Greek culture and life. Still further to the West are the magnificent palaces of the High Priest and Herod, at this time occupied by Pilate,—a symbol of the Roman power.

One cannot help thinking that it was from Mount Scopos

that the Tempter showed our Divine Saviour all the kingdoms of the world and their glory ! For in Jerusalem we have a miniature world, with Greek culture and philosophy, Roman dignity and power, and Hebrew religion and genius. From that point our Saviour could visualise the glory of the whole world focussed in one city.

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## CHAPTER V.

### Sites and Scenes—continued

#### EMMAUS.

**L**EAVING Jerusalem once more, this time by the West Gate near the Joppa gate, we soon reach the village of Emmaus on the Joppa Road. It is to-day a fairly flourishing village, within an easy walk of Jerusalem, and was first identified by C. H. Caspan as the Emmaus of the New Testament. It still has traces of its ancient foundations. After the fall of Jerusalem, Titus placed 800 veterans here, as colonists, and it was therefore called Colonia, a name it still bears.

#### SAMARIA.

Now we must leave Judæa, and go northward to Galilee, the scene of the activities of Christ and His disciples. We must needs go through Samaria. The Gospel only refers to one or two visits of our Saviour to Samaria, so this district does not throw much light on New Testament events. From discoveries made by Raisner in 1908-9, we can see a great part of the city as it was in our Saviour's

time. Here are the remains of the great outer wall, with its ornamental gates, and many important buildings inside ; an old chariot road leads us to the Forum. Adjoining the Forum was a palace with a stone paved court, surrounded by colonnades, with an inscription giving the date A.D. 12-15. This, like the Temple, was evidently built by Herod, who remodelled and embellished the whole city and called it Sebasta in honour of the Emperor. There were large houses and public buildings, even a bath house with a mosaic floor, and hot and cold baths, a large furnace being used for the heating. Fifteen ancient phylacteries were discovered by M. Gaster, the last of which dates back to our Saviour's time. They are the kind referred to in St. Matt. xiii., 5. There is a curious list of male and female sorcerers : evidently the city was given to all sorts of magic and sorcery. To this class belonged Simon the Sorcerer, which beforetime in the same city (Samaria) used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria ; the age we are contemplating was one of sorcery, magic, and incantation.

Not far from Samaria, on the borders of Philistia, was another town, Mareshah, now called Tel-sandahannah. It was discovered in 1890—1900 by Dr. Bliss.

Amongst many other things, sixteen little human figures—revenge dolls—were found, bound in fetters of lead and iron, through which magic was worked on their enemies by the sorcerers. With these were forty-nine





Plains and Town of Jericho.



Rock Platform and Entrance to Caves at Arak-el-Emir.



fragments of magical tablets, with exorcisms, incantations, and imprecations, inscribed upon them in Greek.

### GALILEE.

Leaving Samaria, we enter the northern province of Palestine, Galilee. Though we have journeyed only a few miles, we feel we are in another world; Judæa was, comparatively speaking, a little sanctuary secluded from the world, whilst Galilee is a highway for the traffic of the whole Eastern world, forming, as it were, a bridge between the East and the West. Merchants with their caravans from the Great East, crossed the Jordan either north or south of the Sea of Galilee on their way to Egypt, and *vice versa*, as also did merchants from Decapolis—the league of Greek cities—travelling to Syria, Anatolia, and Europe. It was not only goods that they exchanged, but thoughts and ideas, which gave the people of Galilee a wider outlook on life. This concourse of nations not only broadened their views, but enlarged their purses as well! The popular adage was “Would you be rich, go to Galilee.” Some of these Galilean Jews attained great influence and wealth, like their brethren in Anatolia, where a Jewish firm deposited £192,000 in the bank at Coos. Besides this, Galilee was very much Hellenized in the time of the Maccabæans, a little before Christ; the Jews were as strangers among the Gentiles, the latter being so numerous. Simon

Maccabees removed a large number of Jews into Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

Numerous Roman villas studded the neighbourhood of the Sea of Galilee. The territory of the league of Greek cities included a part of its Eastern foreshore, where Greek culture flourished. This Western civilisation touched the life of the Jewish inhabitant on every side. He began to pronounce even his own sacred language with a foreign accent, so it is not surprising that St. Peter's speech betrayed him.<sup>2</sup> This Galilean brogue was a matter of jest amongst the Rabbis of Jerusalem. The Galileans were also more kindly disposed towards the Gentile world around them. When the Judæan went to Galilee he would make a wide detour, crossing and re-crossing the Jordan rather than go through Samaria, whereas the Galilean would not scruple to travel direct to Jerusalem through that city. He would even pray like Tobit did, for the conversion of the Gentiles.

Of such people our Lord chose eleven of His disciples, to become pioneers of the Gospel to all nations. Among the chief industries in Galilee was that of fishing in the Sea of Galilee, and many of the recorded incidents of our Lord's life and ministry, took place in that region. The Sea of Galilee lay 622ft. below sea level, it was a heart-shaped lake, 13 miles long and 7 miles broad and was called the Eye of Galilee. Its bright blue waters, like sapphire in an emerald setting, reflected in their calm depths

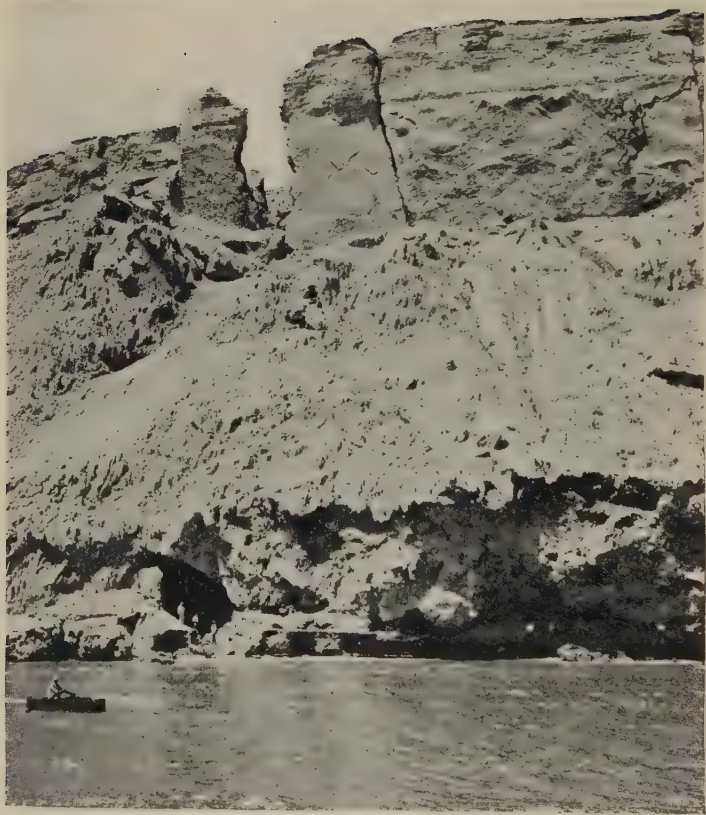
<sup>1</sup> Mac. v. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi., 73.



Wadi Zerka Main (Valley of Jordan).

*By permission of Dr. E. W. G. Masterman.*



Jebel Usdum.

*By permission of Dr. E. W. G. Masterman.*

the beautiful hills all around. There were fleets of fishing vessels, the towns in the vicinity depending mainly upon this industry. The fishermen numbered amongst them men of wealth and social position, and fishing was an honourable calling ; to such a class the disciples belonged. The Lake was teeming with fish, there being as many as 40 different kinds. Some of these, like the cat fish, without a scale, were unclean to the Jews, and were in the Gospel spoken of as ' bad.' " They gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad (unclean) away." <sup>1</sup>

#### GADARA.

To the South-East of the Sea of Galilee lay the land of the Gadarenes, forming a part of the league of Greek cities. Its capital, Gadara, was situated six miles from the sea shore. Here the excavators have opened up most of the city, so that we can see it as it was in the old days. Here are the remains of fine Greek theatres, luxuriously built houses, baths, and temples. Gadara also produced, as already mentioned, fine Greek philosophers. Here in Galilee, Greek culture sprang up and flourished side by side with the Hebrew religion ; locally—so near, yet in ideals,—so very far apart, from each other. The light-hearted, pleasure-loving characteristics, and consequent laxity of moral principles of the Greeks, was as a ' far country ' to a Hebrew, and it was here many a Galilean and Judæan

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii., 47, 58.

prodigal spent his life in riotous living. Again how true the picture is of the Prodigal tending the swine—an unclean animal to the Jews, and therefore not met with in Judæa and Galilee, but there were many herds of swine here in the far country.

Six miles from Gadara lay Gerasa, where the Gergesenes dwelt ; its present name is Kersa, and it lies at the mouth of the Wadi samak. Here the cliffs rise precipitously from the sea, as mentioned in the Gospel, and a herd of swine rushing violently down would certainly be drowned in the sea<sup>1</sup> ! Here also we find numbers of tombs, and we read of the two demon-possessed men coming from these tombs. Prof. Huxley, in his controversy with the late Mr. W. E. Gladstone about the miracles of the New Testament, selected that of the Healing of the Demoniac, and ridiculed it as an impossible fact because the only Gerasa he knew lay thirty miles from the sea, and he could not imagine a herd of swine running that distance, and plunging into the water ! But Archæology has discovered the actual locality to be as depicted in the Gospel story, by the sea.

Following along the shore from Kersa, we reach the North-East of the Lake, and find there a plain, three miles in extent, which is covered with grass at all seasons of the year. This place well fits the description of the site where the Saviour fed the Five Thousand.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. viii., 30.

<sup>2</sup> Mark vi., 39.



We cross the Jordan at its junction with the sea, and we find ourselves on the North-West corner of it: here the shore forms a semi-circular creek resembling an amphitheatre, and the acoustic property of the place is such, that a speaker talking from the brink of the water, could be heard with perfect ease by a very large crowd on the slope! Probably this was the place where our Saviour addressed the multitude from a boat. It was a common practice with the Rabbis in our Saviour's time, to preach in the open air.<sup>1</sup> Rabbi ben Azzai and Rabbi Jehadah taught in the open air on the shores of Tiberas.<sup>2</sup> The temperature of Galilee was very equable, and the people were quite used to spending day and night in the open air, so they could continue with the Saviour three days.<sup>3</sup>

#### CAPERNAUM.

On the North shore of the lake we are not far from Capernaum, which has been identified by a great number of Archæologists with Tel-hum, overlooking the lake. Not far from here were hot springs and a sanatorium, to which large numbers of invalids resorted. This explains why, whenever our Saviour was ministering in this neighbourhood, so many sick folk were brought to Him to be healed. Here the German Oriental Society discovered a Hebrew Synagogue in 1905, a building 78ft. by 59ft. It is constructed of white limestone, almost equal to marble,

<sup>1</sup> Erubin xxixa.

<sup>2</sup> Moad Keton vi.a

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xv., 32.

outside, near the door being ornamented with a vine, candlesticks and a Paschal lamb ! It is the most magnificent synagogue that has been found in Palestine. The one discovered at Chorazin is second to it. Experts place its date in the 1st Century. This is probably the synagogue built by the Centurion.<sup>1</sup> Eleven other groups of synagogues have been discovered in the north of Galilee, dating from the same time. Synagogues were scattered all over the Empire, as forerunners of the Church. The Talmud, perhaps with slight exaggeration, says there were four hundred and eighty of them in Jerusalem. The study of the synagogue is of great interest to Bible students, because the Christian churches were more or less modelled after them, for the Apostles took from the synagogues what was beautiful and useful and made it into a Christian ecclesia. Our Saviour and His disciples were accustomed to attend the Jewish synagogue services. Both St. James and the writer of the Hebrews, designate the Church of the Christians by the same word. The words 'ecclesia' and 'synagogue' are identical in their meaning and signify a congregation or assembly, but later on the Christians adopted the Greek word 'ecclesia' to denote the *Christian* Church. Synagogues were of simple construction, generally built on an elevated position ; the entrance was either from the East as in the case of the Temple, or from the south as in the one at Capernaum, so the congregation

<sup>1</sup> Luke xii., 5.

worshipped either towards the West or towards the North.<sup>1</sup> Worship towards the East was discountenanced by the Jews probably because the heathen worshipped towards the sun.<sup>2</sup> On entering the synagogue one notices five rows of columns. At the top end, in the corner, shut off from the main building, was the Ark or Sanctuary which contained the roll of Holy Scriptures wrapped in linen, and kept in a case. In front of the Ark was a curtain, before which a lamp was kept burning day and night, signifying that 'the scriptures' were as a lamp, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light."<sup>3</sup> At the front, facing the sanctuary, were special seats. In some synagogues, like the one at Alexandria, there were seventy-one. These are the 'chief' seats occupied by influential people.<sup>4</sup> The ordinary congregation had no seats. Near the centre was the platform or 'bema' where the portions of scripture from the law and the prophets were read, and where the chair called the 'seat of Moses' was placed, herein the preachers *sat* to teach. "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in 'Moses' seat."<sup>5</sup> The Synagogue service was simple in the extreme. Here there were no priests, no sacrifices and no elaborate ceremonial; the whole service consisted of Confession of Faith: reading and expounding the Scriptures, Psalms and Prayers. Two benedictions preceded the Confession

<sup>1</sup> Baba B. xxv., 8.      <sup>2</sup> Ezek. viii., 16, 17.      <sup>3</sup> Prov. vi., 23.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiii., 6.      <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxiii., 2.

of Faith (shema) "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," etc.<sup>1</sup> The service is built on the unity and majesty of God.

The Talmud narrates that a king going to build a city was searching for a foundation, but digging, he often came upon springs of water, at last he came upon a rock. So when God was about to build His world He could not build it on the generation of Enos : but when He saw that faithful Abraham should rise in the future He said, "Behold I have found a rock." So Abraham is called a rock (Tsar), and the service of the Synagogue is built on his confession of faith in God, that is on the "rock." Similarly the Church is built on the "rock" of Peter's confession of our Saviour's Deity, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God."

The Confession of Faith was followed by prayer. Sometimes the Synagogue was called the place of prayer (proseuchee). The fixed form of prayer was called "The Eighteen Blessings" ("shemoneh esrete," was a good specimen of synagogue liturgy in our Saviour's time).<sup>2</sup> The minister when reading the prayers, turned towards the Ark, at the conclusion the congregation said "Amen." But the principal part of the service was the reading of the Law and the Prophets, and the exposition thereof. So the Synagogue was rightly called the place of instruction and exposition, or Beth-ha-midrash.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. vi., 4.

<sup>2</sup> Edersheim "Life & Time of Jesus," Vol. 1, p. 440.

Philo, referring to these synagogues in Alexandria, says "They had hundreds of houses of instruction." The teaching in the synagogue was entirely explanatory of the portion of scripture that had been read, it was not a sermon in our modern use of the word. The one who gave the exposition sat in the chair (Moses' seat) and taught, as any Bible Class leader might do.

When our Divine Saviour went to the synagogue at Nazareth, He was invited to read the lesson, and we read "He closed the book and sat down, and began to say unto them, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.'"<sup>1</sup>

The service concluded with the singing of Psalms (or hymns), and the Aaronic Benediction, which was pronounced from the steps in front of the Ark.<sup>2</sup> The worship of the Apostolic Church followed more or less the precedent of that of the synagogue, rather than that of the Temple, for, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, the central worship of the Temple, i.e., the priesthood, and the offering of sacrifices, had reached their completion in Christ.

The "Breaking of Bread" formed an addition to the synagogue service. Judging from the evidences in the New Testament and in one of the Didache (the earliest Christian writing after the New Testament) and from the Gentile writer Pliny, we can picture fairly accurately, the worship of the Church of the Apostles—The Service began with the Benediction, 'Grace be unto you and peace

<sup>1</sup> Luke iv., 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Num. vi., 24—26.

from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,' then followed an Invocation of Jesus, and confession that He is Lord.<sup>1</sup> Then one would pray, and another, and at the end of each prayer a hearty Amen followed. After a hymn, came reading from the Old Testament Scriptures, and also from the Life of Jesus, concerning His life and death. Then came the 'Instruction' by an Apostle or Prophet, based on what had been read. The Benediction closed the service." Dr. Duchesne terms this simple Apostolic worship "The Liturgy of the Holy Ghost."<sup>2</sup>

We must now glance at the Government of the synagogue. It was democratic, under a council of Elders. At the outset, we ought to know something of these Elders. The importance of old men, especially in the East, was the natural development of the authority of the head of the house. The reverence due to parents, and to the aged, is a favourite theme of the Old and New Testament. A Temanite is confident because he says "With us are both the grey headed, and very aged men."<sup>3</sup> In olden days, dignity, experience, honour and learning were considered the special attributes of old age. Later on, men, young or old, who possessed these qualities, were called "elders." There were "elders" amongst the Egyptians, Moabites, and Phœnicians, who, as the ministers of their Government, corresponded with the Pharaoh of Egypt, about B.C. 1500.

<sup>1</sup> "Church & the Ministry in the Early Centuries" T. H. Lindsay  
p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> "Christian Worship" p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Job. xv., 10.



Some elders were ambassadors among the Romans, and others the chief cultivators of crown lands.<sup>1</sup> It was from such men of dignity and experience that the Council was chosen by the people, for the Government of the Synagogue, and of these, one was chosen as Ruler of the Synagogue. The chief qualification of the Ruler was that he should be humble, because the Rabbis say, "The Holy One mourns over a congregation whose ruler is haughty." St. Paul suggests certain qualifications for the leader or bishop of the Christian Church.<sup>2</sup> The Ruler's duty was to preside over the Council—supervise the external order of the Service—appoint teachers and preachers, and see that the service was carried on according to the recognised usage.

The Council of Elders also had judicial functions. Delinquents of the Community had to be judged; the punishment meted out was called "Cherem anathema," and was pronounced especially against *heretics*. So St. Paul says, if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema; another sentence was that of the Midduy, that is the exclusion of a wrong doer from the worship of the synagogue. Severer than these was "Shamaata," or the delivery of the evil doer into the hand of Satan.<sup>3</sup> So St. Paul says, "Deliver such an one unto Satan."<sup>4</sup>

Differences had to be settled, and decisions arrived at,

<sup>1</sup> Milligan's Papyri, pp. 27, 74.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iii., 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus B. J., Bk. ii., viii., 8.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5.

as to the legality or illegality of matters, and as to what might, and might not be allowed ; such as whether sending a letter by a Gentile on the eve of the Sabbath was permissible or not. Whether a voyage might be started, or wood gathered on a Sabbath, etc., etc. Such decisions were expressed by the common formula, " The house of Shammi binds," or " The house of Hillel looses." So the Council of Elders possessed the power of binding and loosing. The same power was committed to the disciples by the Master, to declare what was lawful or unlawful. In connection with this we notice the passage in St. John's Gospel, " Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

In this connection there was a minor official, who was called Chazzan (deacon). It was his duty to teach children ; to bring out, and put back, the Roll of the Book in the synagogue. It was to this " minister " the Saviour gave the Roll after He had read the lesson.<sup>1</sup> He had to administer the scourging to the delinquents, and to take the collection ; assigning part for the upkeep of the synagogue, and distributing the remainder amongst the needy. This collection could not be made in the synagogue, as the Jews were not allowed to touch money on the Sabbath day : the promises, however, could be collected there on the Sabbath, and the coins on the following day—

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x., 17.

the first of the week. So in the Christian Church the Apostles appointed seven deacons, whose chief duty it was to distribute alms amongst the poor, and the collection, for which St. Paul orders "upon the first day of the week, let every man lay by him a store."<sup>1</sup> So in the early Church, elders were appointed by the congregation, to superintend the affairs of the local churches, and from one of these a leader or superintendent was chosen who was sometimes called the Elder (or Presbyter) and sometimes the Bishop. These terms Elder and Bishop are synonymous, there is no difference in the order held. These two names for the same office are used by Clement of Rome, Polycarp, and the Didache. It was not until the 2nd Century that the idea of a Bishop taking a *higher* rank was known in the Church. Ignatius was the first to separate the elder from the bishop, and the birthplace of the separation was Asia Minor and not Jerusalem!

Women could not be members of the synagogue, though sometimes they were called the 'mothers of the synagogue.' They could attend service as spectators, but could take no part in it. This may explain the attitude of St. Paul towards women in the Christian service.

### NAZARETH.

Leaving Capernaum, we must find time to pay a short visit to *Nazareth* in the South-West. Nazareth, the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xvi., 1, 3.

modern En-Nasirah, 1,600ft. above sea level, lying in the hollow of a hill, amid a natural amphitheatre of hills, with its white houses and walls, green cactus hedges, shady fig and silvery olive trees, and spreading vines, presents a lovely appearance. St. Jerome happily speaks of it as "An opening rose" and calls it the "Flower of Galilee." Antoninus the martyr calls it "a paradise." The Nazareth where our Lord spent His boyhood was probably built a little higher up than the En-Nasirah of to-day, which is a town of poor houses and bad smells. There is a crag known as the Mount of Precipitation, and near to it the remains of an ancient synagogue; probably it was from this synagogue the Jews hurried our Saviour, intending to throw Him down the brow of this hill. It is said sometimes that there is no record of the first thirty years of our Saviour's life, but the study of His three years' teaching, echoes and re-echoes with the life of Nazareth. He was keenly sensible to all that went on around Him, with the tragedies of the widow and the prodigal son, of the unjust judge and grasping publican. He noticed the poor housewife mending an old Galilean seamless coat, searching for an odd piece of material with which to patch it: also the two women at dawn grinding corn for the household meals; and the anxious married woman looking for a lost piece of silver, in her small windowless house, by candlelight. He also saw the school children playing in the streets, and noticed the sulky ones who refused to

play. He had often seen the vine dresser pruning the vines, cutting out the useless branches, and leaving the stout ones on the stem near the root, to bear fruit in the coming harvest. He had seen the farmer testing his oxen before the early rain, and therefore having a good excuse for the non-acceptance of the wedding invitation; the persevering shepherd taking pains to mend his bruised reed, (mouth organ), was also not unnoticed.

By the end of February the fields and hills round Nazareth and between it and Tabor, (5 miles to the West), were carpeted with gorgeous flowers, amongst these were the iris, anemone, narcissus, and gladiolus, all included in the 'lilies of the field.' But change was so very rapid here, that one day all nature might smile with these golden sprays of flowers, and the next would see them all withered, blown upon by the hot S.E. wind! The women then gathered them for heating their ovens. "If then God so clothe the grass (flowers) which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven."<sup>1</sup>

Near by was the high road, filled with incessant traffic between Mesopotamia and Egypt. Merchantmen, Nubians, Romans, Gauls, Greeks, Arabs, Phoenicians, etc., were passing and repassing from the East and the West. The Saviour looks forward to the time when merchandise should not be the object of the journey, but "Many shall

<sup>1</sup> Luke xx., 28.

come from the East and the West and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.”<sup>1</sup>

### DAMASCUS.

Leaving Galilee behind, we must travel with St. Paul up to Damascus, the capital of Syria. Damascus is one of the oldest cities in the world. While Tadmor, Palmyra and Geresh are buried in ruins, Damascus still remains one of the queens of Oriental cities, embowered in its gardens and orchards. It is still to every modern Arab what it was to Mahomet,—a symbol of Paradise. With this city we are reminded of the conversion of St. Paul. The Sandedrin of Jerusalem exercised jurisdiction over every Jewish community of the world, its order was binding on every orthodox Jew, wherever he might be. It had power to issue a warrant to the synagogue at Damascus for the apprehension of the Christians there.<sup>2</sup> St. Paul came as a voluntary inquisitor, armed with the authority and commission of the Sanhedrin.<sup>3</sup> Here are still to be found traces of the old city, with the walls and Roman gates. The street that is called Straight, still runs through it from the Eastern to the Western gate under the modern name *Derb-el-mustaqim*.

One of the discovered inscriptions, dating from the 3rd Century, reads as follows :—‘The synagogue of the Marionists of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, erected

<sup>1</sup> Matt. viii., 11.

<sup>2</sup> Schurer ii., 185.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xxvi., 12.



by the forethought of Paul the Presbyter.' Here the ancient St. John's Church, constructed by Arcadius, about A.D.400, was subsequently turned into a Mahomedan mosque, but the following inscription is still visible : "Thy Kingdom O Christ is an everlasting kingdom and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."<sup>1</sup>

### ANTIOCH, SYRIA.

Leaving Damascus, we cross the mountains of Lebanon and taking a North-Westerly direction come to the famous city of *Antioch* in Syria. It is situated 20 miles from the Mediterranean, in a fertile plain which separates the Lebanon ranges from the spurs of the Taurus, and is surrounded with groves of palm, olive and myrtle. Like all Greek cities in Syria, two colonnaded streets, paved for the greater part with blocks of white marble, ran through it, four miles in length. There was a magnificent Forum, and a large Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. The mountain behind the city bore on its highest peak a statue of Jupiter, who claimed this godless city for his own. But the humble followers of Christ, under the banner of the Cross, sought to win the city for Him. Many races met within its walls, and it became a city of luxury and pleasure : enjoyment of life was the chief aim of the people. The pleasure gardens of Daphne were situated 5 miles from the city ; they were very magnificent, 10 miles in circumference,

<sup>1</sup> A. Harnach's *Mission & Explanation of Christianity* ii., p. 124.

containing a Temple of Apollo, also groves of laurel and cypress, sparkling fountains, colonnades, baths and halls. The whole city acquired a very bad name and even invoked the satire of Juvenal, on account of its superstition and immorality. Mommson, the historian of the Roman Republic says 'The Muses could not find themselves at home in Antioch.' Here, where even Greek art and culture could not find a home, the Gentile Church actually had its birth, and was called for the first time 'Christian.'<sup>1</sup> It is said the Antiochians were famous for the nicknames they gave, and it is supposed by some people that they gave this name to the followers of Christ. The Christians accepted the title and made it an honourable one. But Eusebius says "The Christians adopted the name themselves because Christianity is Christ. His person, life and work are the keystone of the Church, the Alpha and Omega of the Gospel." The name designates a vital union between Christ and believers. An early Liturgy says "We thank thee that the name of thy Christ is named upon us." The existence of the Church in such a city manifests the great power of His Gospel; where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. The Church not only *existed*, but became a *living* one, the first missionary church to evangelise others, for it was from this town that St. Paul and Barnabas set out, and to Antioch that they returned to report their success to the Church.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi., 26.





St. Paul's Gate, Tarsus.

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A remarkable discovery at Antioch was that made by some well-diggers in 1910, when they found seven silver objects. Of these the most important was a silver chalice, the bowl of which was covered with a beautifully ornamented silver sheet, dating probably somewhere about A.D. 57-87. But the chief wonder is yet to be told. Portrait figures of Christ and ten of His Apostles, were worked out in this beautiful design. Dr. Gustavus Eisen, in September, 1916, reported in detail the particulars of the discovery and described the decoration<sup>1</sup>:—"The face of Christ seems divine; no subsequent artist has succeeded in imparting that sweetness and gentleness which tradition gives to the Saviour's features, and which we here for the first time see realized: the heads of the Apostles are equally remarkable, we seem to read the character of each of them, the very soul of man is here portrayed in the metal as perhaps never since in Christian art."

### TARSUS.

Leaving the city of Antioch, and travelling 20 miles westward, we take a ship at the port of Seleucia and soon reach the harbour of Tarsus. The history of this city goes far back; probably its name is mentioned in Gen. x., 4. Josephus takes the name Tarshish as meaning Tarsus. Ezekiel refers to certain metals being exported from

<sup>1</sup> New Archæological Discoveries. C. M. Cobern, pp. 550, 551.

Tarshish, and they are all found in this neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup> The earliest historical reference to the city is that on the black obelisk of Shalmanezar, B.C.900, now in the British Museum. It tells how Tarshish was captured by Sennacherib, and rebuilt by him. Julius Cæsar visited the city B.C.47 and made it a free city, and the capital of the province of Cilicia, with the right of election and of managing its own internal affairs.

Sailing up the river Cydnus, we come to the magnificent lake Rhegma, about 30 miles in circumference, which was used for a harbour. Beyond this lay ancient Tarsus in the Cilician plain. Some miles up on the slopes of Taurus lay the summer city. Beyond this, passing through a very deep gorge we reach the Cilician gate, a very fine piece of engineering work. The possession of this gate, through which caravans of merchandise came from the Nile across the Euphrates to the Indus via the Khyber Pass, and across central Asia to China, in conjunction with the harbour of Tarsus, made the city a great emporium for both the East and West. Curtius calls Tarsus the 'Athens of Asia Minor.' Xenophon a 'joy of heart.' St. Paul 'no mean city.' The Jews were brought to Tarsus several centuries B.C. by the Seleucid kings, who granted them a special charter and rights, and equal citizenship with others; so St. Paul was a Roman citizen by birth.

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxvii., 12.



The Tarsus of St. Paul's days was not only a great emporium where Arabs, Syrians, Romans and Greeks rubbed shoulders, but it was a University city, ranking with Athens and Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> Amongst its professors were Athenodorus—the master and adviser of Augustus, to whom Augustus owed much of his wise rule: many of the wise sayings of Athenodorus can be traced in the writings of Seneca and St. Paul. We may give one example "So live with men as though God saw you, so speak with God as though men were listening." Besides Athenodorus there was Nestor the tutor of Tiberius, Zeno, and many other famous philosophers. It became the centre of stoic philosophy. St. Paul, evidently, before he sat at the feet of Gamaliel for theological instruction, imbibed a great deal of Greek learning. He could aptly quote, when he wished in his missionary work, from the Greek poets, and many of his words and phrases can be traced to Greek literature. He uses twenty words in the epistles which were never used by the Apostles in the Gospels. The word 'conscience' is a Pauline word, it was originally used by Chrysippus Soli of Tarsus, and the phrase 'spend and be spent' is peculiar to Seneca. 'Evil communications corrupt good manners' is traced to Menander.

Such ideas as fore-ordination, and life as a campaign, are noticeable in the writings of Athenodorus. St. Paul when he left Tarsus and went to study with Gamaliel in

<sup>1</sup> Strabo xix., 4.

Jerusalem, was encouraged in his pursuit of Greek learning, because Gamaliel, the son of Hillel, belonged to the liberal school of Pharisees, and himself studied Hellenistic literature. We see here how God was preparing and qualifying a man for world-wide Evangelistic Missionary work !

The inscription written and placed on the Cross by Pilate, in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, " Jesus, the King of the Jews " needed a man Hebrew by birth, Greek by learning, and Roman by citizenship, to promulgate and give reality to the truth unwittingly written by Pilate. Such was St. Paul. He was first and foremost a Jew, profoundly conscious of the destiny of his people, to whom belonged the covenant and the services of God. He was steeped in the knowledge of the Old Testament from which he drew all his ideas and impulses. Greek philosophy broadened his mind and gave him a wider outlook upon the world. He rebelled against the exclusiveness of his Pharisaic brethren and asked " Is God the God of the Jews only, and not also of the Gentiles ? " He was well versed in the Stoic doctrine of world-wide citizenship,<sup>1</sup> and he was also familiar with the hymn of Cleanthes of Tarsus,<sup>2</sup> which ran thus :—

" There will be one law at Rome,  
Another at Athens  
But the same law

<sup>1</sup> Cicero de Rip. iii., 22.

<sup>2</sup> J. Adam, " Vitality of Platonism " p. 146.

Everlasting, unchanging,

Will bind all nations at all times.

There will be one master ruler of all, even of gods,

The arbitrator and proposer of the law."

A Jew who was merely a Palestinian could never realise that the whole world was his mission field: he could never touch the heart of the Roman world, nor feel its pulse. But here is the man.

But the realisation alone of the noble ideals of the Jew and the Greek was not sufficient—there was needed a motive power, a force able to bring these ideals to fruition. We have that need supplied by the Roman citizenship of St. Paul. The Romans were essentially a people of 'push' and organization, their one aim being the subjection of the world to their Emperor. St. Paul used these methods to make, not the Emperor, but the Christ the King of the World. It is a noteworthy fact that the three greatest Jews mentioned in Holy Scriptures were Moses of Egypt, Ezra of Babylonia, and Paul of Cilicia, all born outside Palestine!

### TEACHING OF ST. PAUL.

There have been lengthy disputes in religious magazines and books, written by eminent writers of the Critical School, on the subject 'Jesus or Paul.' It is suggested by some and affirmed by others that the Teaching of St. Paul in the Epistles is distinct from that of the Gospels,

and that Christianity is based, not on the teaching of Christ, but on that of St. Paul ! The Conversion of St. Paul is placed by Prof. Harnack of the Critical School, within a year of Christ's resurrection. If so, his teaching commenced side by side with that of the Apostles, and if his teachings were either contrary or different to theirs, he would have incurred great opposition from them : but we are told he was received by the Apostles as a brother, and his teaching had their approval. The Gospel preached by St. Paul was not contrary but supplementary : His Epistles might be looked upon as the Fifth Gospel according to St. Paul ! While the Evangelists recorded the sayings and doings of Christ in His earthly ministry, St. Paul's Gospel was from the standpoint of the Saviour's resurrection, which is the fountain head of his teaching. He says he did not consult with flesh and blood, he did not derive his teaching from human sources—not from the feet of Gamaliel, nor at the School of Stoic philosophy, but on the Damascus road. His experience upon that road is described by him somewhat graphically—He speaks of himself as “one born out of due time,”<sup>1</sup> that is his conversion took place very suddenly ‘at a stroke’ or in “the twinkling of an eye.” In another place he used the word “apprehended” meaning ‘seized suddenly’ or ‘by main force,’<sup>2</sup> in speaking of his conversion. These two passages describe a sudden conversion or revolution of St. Paul.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv., 8.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii., 12.

So that all his being, his will, affections, thought and learning, were revolutionized throughout, creating a new perspective of God and man. This was brought about by a short word of only four Greek letters 'Ophthe,' that word was used in his Greek Old Testament to signify a vision of God.<sup>1</sup> Here is was the vision of Christ, risen, glorified, radiant with His Father's majesty. This explains the whole of St. Paul's life and teaching. In the light of that vision all his cardinal doctrines, such as the Divinity of Christ, and His atonement, righteousness, sanctification, etc., were given. To illustrate this point we will take one or two examples. That St. Paul was perfectly familiar with the earthly history of our Lord, is shewn in his epistles, and he had heard of the Crucifixion, but as a Jew he shuddered at the idea of the death of the *Messiah*, which had no place in the Jewish thought of his day! and, indeed being familiar with the passage in Deut. "He that hangeth is accursed of God,"<sup>2</sup> he would argue that therefore Christ could not be the Messiah, as He was rejected both of God and man. Therefore his persecution of the preachers of the Cross was not a mere wanton act, but was the outcome of the honour in which he held Messiah, according to his Pharisaic knowledge. But the vision changed all things—The Saviour in His resurrection glory proved that though He had been rejected by most of the Jewish people He had been accepted by God,<sup>3</sup> Who had showed Him to be His

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv., 8.<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxi., 23.<sup>3</sup> Rom. i., 4.

Son by the resurrection from the dead. "God hath made Him both Lord and Christ."<sup>1</sup> He is "the image of God."<sup>2</sup> So the vision proved to St. Paul that Christ was not a false Messiah, but *the Lord, the Christ*.

The 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians is considered to be his earliest writing, A.D. 51. He speaks of Christ twenty times as 'Lord' and that word in the Old Testament meant Jehovah. St. Paul designates the Saviour by that word one hundred and thirty-one times in his Epistles. Arising out of this are his principle doctrines, the Atonement, Justification and Sanctification. Take the Atonement. If Christ were Jehovah the Lord, He could not have died for Himself or for His own sins, for He was sinless. He must therefore have died for others—for mankind. "Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." He made atonement for man not only by His death but by His life. The High Priest, to make atonement for the people had to enter the Holiest of Holies with the blood of the victim. The Divine Saviour as the Priest entered His Father's presence with the blood of His cross. He died to purchase, and lives to apply, redemption. So there is redemption and renewal of life for man, in his union with the risen Saviour.

In the appearance of Christ in His glorified body on the Damascus road, St. Paul saw Him to be the 'first fruits' of them that slept, and the earnest of the resur-

<sup>1</sup> Acts. xix., 22.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iv., 4.



rection of the believers ; that is, the measure of Christ's resurrection was the measure of that of the believers,<sup>1</sup> and that they would be conformed to the same image, and fashioned like unto His glorious body.<sup>2</sup> This was unlike the teaching of the Pharisees who believed in the resurrection of a material body, as before death. On the other hand the Stoics taught that the body never rose, but only that the spirit, emancipated from it, led a ghostly existence, ending eventually in absorption.

The vision of the risen Lord was also the secret of the joy, hope and endurance of St. Paul's life, hope, joy, endurance, and victory, in the teeth of opposition and persecution. This Risen Saviour, transcendent in His glory, was, by the Holy Spirit, permeating all things, and becoming the very atmosphere of St. Paul's life. Over one hundred times such expressions as "in Christ" and "Christ in me" occur,—so that He was not a mere historical figure, but a *power*, radiating and energising St. Paul's life. It was a life within life, a self within self, not merely an inner light, as the mystic taught, but a Divine Presence, enriching and irradiating the inner recesses of his soul. In ordinary circumstances he should have been one of the saddest of men ;—he had lost all things, was misunderstood by his friends, persecuted by his enemies, he had fought with the beasts (mob) at Ephesus, and had the prospect of martyrdom before him, but we find him one

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii., 29.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii., 21.

of the happiest of men, because he lived and moved in Christ !

### ST. PAUL'S APPEARANCE.

It is commonly said that St. Paul was insignificant in his person, and poor in his speech. This is probably based on a book called 'The Acts of Paul and Thecla' written in the 2nd and 3rd Century. Paul is depicted as a 'low sized' man, bow-legged, with a crooked nose. An American version of the same book gives him blue eyes, also the Corinthians are reported to have said that his 'bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible.' But such a mistaken picture of St. Paul, as Bishop Lightfoot says, will fade away under the light of careful examination. If St. Paul were as many people think, so insignificant in appearance, could the people of Lystra have mistaken him for the god Hermes (Mercury) ? The statue of Hermes, by Praxiteles, at Olympia, possesses peculiar grace and beauty. Again, would Lysias, the Roman Centurion, when he arrested St. Paul in Jerusalem, have mistaken him for a leader of bandits ? The author's personal knowledge of some of the chiefs of these bandits, in Anatolia, is, that they are men of fine physique, endowed with prowess and endurance, and chosen as leaders on that account. Again, as we have already noticed, the authorities of the Jewish Synagogue, in administering corporal punishment, gave only eighteen strokes to the physically weak, to others thirty-nine. St. Paul not only received thirty-

nine, but thirty-nine at five different periods, obviously being regarded as a man of a strong constitution by the Jewish authorities. We think St. Paul must have been a man of at least normal appearance and strength. Another mistaken idea is that St. Paul had very weak eyes. This impression is founded upon the misinterpretation of certain passages. One is Gal. vi., 2, "Ye see how large a letter I have written." St. Paul is supposed to have suffered from ophthalmia, and to have been obliged therefore to form his letters very large. In his day it was the custom to write letters by dictation, and sometimes to close them by adding a line and the signature in one's own hand. Here St. Paul had adopted the ordinary method, and added a few lines himself: he wrote them in big characters not on account of ophthalmia, but by way of emphasising the genuineness and importance of the letter, as one would emphasise a passage by underlining. As Prof. Sandy rightly says, St. Paul was calling the attention of the Galatians, and emphasising his authority.<sup>1</sup> Prof. Ramsay also supports this view. Another passage runs "Ye would pluck out your eyes and give them to me." This is thought to mean that the Galatians, knowing the suffering of St. Paul, would willingly have given him their eyes. But 'eye' in the Old Testament stands for what is dear and precious: "To keep as the apple of an eye,"<sup>2</sup> and it is still

<sup>1</sup> Elliott Com. Gal., pp. 452, 462.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxiii., 10. Ps. xii., 18.

usual in the neighbourhood of Galatia, when wishing to express great love and goodwill for any one, to use the phrase 'pluck and give one's eye' for one. So probably the Galatians were not offering to give their literal eyes, but simply the best things that they had to give, and what they valued most.

Again in Acts we read St. Paul did not know it was the High Priest who spoke, when he ordered someone to smite him on the mouth.<sup>1</sup> From this it is argued that St. Paul could not recognise the High Priest on account of his bad eyesight. But St. Paul had been absent from Jerusalem for some years, and this High Priest 'Annas' was not the Annas of the Gospels: very probably St. Paul had never seen him before. Further, the High Priest wore no distinctive dress except when engaged in actual religious service. When a voice from the crowd cried out 'Smite him on the mouth' he replied "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall," probably taking him for one of the Pharisees—to whom many names were applied, the fourth class being called the "Painted" Pharisees. It was quite within reason that St. Paul did not know that it was the High Priest who had spoken.

Some scholars, like Prof. Hansrath, of Heidelberg, disparage St. Paul's literary knowledge, and believe him to have been poor in his vocabulary, and ignorant of literary style. They come to this belief partly owing to

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxiii.

his words in ii. Corinthians xi., 6, "Though I be rude in speech" and partly owing to the language in which his Epistles are written. We have already indicated that St. Paul was well acquainted with Hellenistic culture, and with Attic Greek in which scholars of his day wrote. St. Paul as an ambassador with a message for the people, and not as an author, wrote his Epistles in the language of the people (see page 19). Similarly Wesley and Newman, though highly educated, wrote their discourses in the simplest style of English. The Greeks 2,000 years ago made a special study of the art of rhetoric; there were professional orators, and all public speakers were trained in that art. St. Paul's words "rude in speech" mean literally, that he was expressing his thoughts in the style of a *layman*, without oratorical or professional flourishes.

#### WOMEN OF TARSUS.

The two orations of Dion Chrysostom, A.D.110, speak of the Tarsian women as being closely veiled when out-of-doors. This veil was called a 'power,' the same word as is used to signify the 'power' of a magistrate. A Tarsian woman, veiled, could go anywhere freely without fear of molestation. Diodorus describes the veil of a woman as a 'crown.' Speaking of the mother of the Egyptian King Osymedny he says, 'she wore three crowns, or royalties, over her head, as a daughter, mother, and wife of a king.' So a veil was a symbol of both dignity

and power. Women who went about without a veil were women of loose character. Another idea prevalent at this time was that angels were the guardians and spectators of the lives of men and women, and rejoiced over the sinner's conversion. Such expressions were used by the earliest Fathers as, 'open the eyes of faith and thou shalt behold a multitude of angels.' "If the air is filled with angels, much more the church." This idea throws great light on the words of St. Paul, "For this cause, ought the women to have power (veil) on her head, because of the angels."

In connection with this subject, we may just refer to St. Peter's remarks upon "plaiting the hair and wearing of gold"; it should read 'plaiting the hair *with* gold.' In ancient times, as now, the hair was divided into from eleven to twenty-five plaits; into these were woven three silk strings, having an immense number of small golden spangles fastened to them at irregular intervals, and gold ornaments at the end; sometimes richer women had pearls and emeralds. The gold spangles often entirely hid the hair and glittered and tingled at every movement of the head. It would be difficult to find in the way of jewellery a vainer or more artificial form of female adornment: it was not only a mark of extreme luxury, but was often worn by women dancers, who were always women of ill repute; hence the words of St. Paul, "That women adorn themselves with modest apparel, . . . not with







The Cilician Gate from the North.

*By permission of H. Chas. Woods, Esq.*



Valley of the Tabaz. Taurus Mountains.

*By permission of H. Chas. Woods, Esq.*

braided hair and gold or pearls.”<sup>1</sup> This jewelled head-dress is called ‘sefa’ by the Arabs of to-day.

Resuming our journey, we pass along through beautiful vineyards, up the slopes of the foothills, that rise tier upon tier as buttresses to the white mountain ridge of Taurus, through the bottle-necked Cilician Pass, even as Paul and Silas walked to the cities of the Plateau. The possession of this Plateau, the Anatolian Plain, has always been considered the key to further conquests in the Near East. St. Paul, knowing its geographical advantages, sought to conquer it for Christ, and extend His Empire to the West. We can to-day find traces of St. Paul’s journey in this part of the world. The ruins of Adada bear the name of ‘Kara Bavlo’ or ‘Paul.’ Five miles from these ruins is the modern town of Bavlo (Paul). This Plateau is described by Strabo as a land of beautiful lakes and rivers—Lakes Caralis, Linini and Ascania.<sup>2</sup> The land is very fertile, many spots producing vines and olives luxuriantly. But the place was made famous by its treacherous rivers, which, when swollen by the melting snows of the mountains, were both swift and unfordable. We have known many instances of men having lost their lives in these torrential rivers. Frederic Barbarossa, King of Prussia, on his way to the Holy Land to fight Saladin in the Crusades, after having defeated the Moslems

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. ii., 9.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo vii., 1—3.

in battles, was drowned in the Calycadnus, one of these rivers in Pisidia, in 1140 A.D.

This plateau was a hotbed of brigands. The Roman Emperor successfully stamped out brigands in many parts of his Empire, but this mountainous region still remained infested with robbers. A recently found Epitaph of St. Paul's day was in memory of "a man Sousou slain by robbers." Well could St. Paul describe his Missionary travels "in journeying often, in perils of waters (rivers), in perils of robbers."

### LYSTRA.

Off the main road, in a secluded spot amongst the hills, we find Lystra. This little town was almost untouched by Greek civilization. St. Paul heard the inhabitants speaking in the speech of Lycaonia. In 1909 an inscription was discovered by Prof. Ramsay in a ruin, recording the dedication of a statue to Zeus (Jupiter) and Hermes (Mercury).<sup>1</sup> These two gods were classed together in a local cult. Another inscription, found a little to the South of Lystra by Prof. Deissman, records, that the inhabitants out of gratitude to Zeus decreed that thirty boys clothed in white with twigs on their heads, attended by Priests, should sing daily before his statue. According to Ovid, Zeus and Mercury paid a visit to Baucis and Philemon, in human form, and because of this incident the people of Lystra built a temple

<sup>1</sup> Classical Review 1910, p. 76.

outside the gate to these gods, as the protectors of the city.<sup>1</sup> Temples throughout Asia Minor were served by Priests whose colleges were situated in them. "The Priest of Jupiter, which was before (outside) their city, brought oxen and garlands, unto their gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people."<sup>2</sup> The people of Lystra called St. Paul, Mercury, and Barnabas, Jupiter. It has been customary in the East from very early times, for a man of importance to bear a dignified demeanour. If he be in the company of inferior officials, it is their work to carry on the conversation, or if in the market, to do the bargaining. When the Lystrans saw St. Paul taking the leading part in the conversation, they thought Barnabas must be the chief, and St. Paul his inferior, so they gave the chief honour to Barnabas, calling him Jupiter, whilst they called St. Paul Mercury, being the chief speaker.

Asia Minor had many Temples, they were alleged to be the abode of gods; hence St. Paul's words, that Christian believers are the Temples of the Holy Ghost.<sup>3</sup> People were more careful in the building of sumptuous temples than they were in the building of their own houses. Many of these Temples took more than a lifetime to complete, like Herod's Temple in Jerusalem, which was begun in B.C. 19, but not completely finished until A.D. 64. The ruin of an unfinished Temple with gigantic columns was found near Milites; and many ruins with good foundations of

<sup>1</sup> Ovid Met. viii., 6, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiv., 13.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. iii., 16.



stone, show that they were hurriedly finished with inferior materials. One found near Ephesus was built of wood and straw, and some have been found which had been reduced to ashes by fire. These facts illuminate the words of St. Paul, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble every man's work will be made manifest . . . and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

#### ANTIOCH, PISIDIA.

Making our way towards to North West, we reach Antioch in Pisidia, which is situated on the boundary of Phrygia, some 3,600 feet above sea level, on the slopes of Sultan Dagħ, and over-looking a large fertile plain. The Jews who had been brought there by Antiochus, by whom they had been granted civic rights, had become very influential. An inscription of the 2nd Century relating to a Jewess, Deborah, says, she sprang from ancestors who had held many state offices, and was given in marriage to a famous man, Pamphillus.<sup>2</sup> The Jewish religion had evidently attracted many Greek women of the aristocratic class, and they fell under the lash of Juvenal's satirical pen. So the Jews in the persecution of St. Paul "stirred up the devout and honourable women."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii., 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ramsay "Cities of St. Paul," p. 256.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xiii., 50.



A Temple was here excavated by Prof. Ramsay in 1910-13, with a colossal altar, 66 feet by 41 feet—this seems enormous for an altar ! In the central hall was the place of initiation. with a baptismal font for the purpose of purification. In the North East corner was a throne for the deity. Numerous inscriptions were found, in one of which a worshipper confessed he had sinned, and needed atonement. The “ initiates ” were supposed, on their initiation, to see wonderful things in the Temple and to hear mystic words. The above discoveries throw light not only on the worship prevalent here, but also on that at Colosse.<sup>1</sup> In Colossians, St. Paul refers to the technical word used in the initiation “ Intruding ” (*enbateus*) in those things he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshy mind.” Again, there was on the part of the Phrygians and Colossians a false idea of humility ; they felt they were unworthy to come into the presence of the deity, so they worshipped him through the medium of angels. “ Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping angels.” We have traces even in the 4th Century, of this doctrine of angel worship. The Council of Laodicea in A.D. 363, ruled in its 35th canon that it is not right for Christians to abandon the Church of God, and go away and invoke angels. The doctrine of angels was very elaborate in this neighbourhood. It was taught that they originally emanated from God, and were opposed by a host of bad angels, who were

<sup>1</sup> Col. ii., 18.

divided into seven demoniacal principalities and powers, which occupied seven different planets<sup>1</sup>: this host was malevolently disposed towards men, hence the words of St. Paul, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."<sup>2</sup> So the angels were not only intermediaries between God and man, but the *protectors* of mankind from the evil angels!

Probably by far the most important of all the inscriptions discovered at Antioch, was one mentioning a family of the name of Caristanii. Caristianus acted as Præfectus under the Cyrenius mentioned by St. Luke.<sup>3</sup> It indicates that Cyrenius was Governor of Syria at the birth of our Saviour, and also later on. One of the Caristanii married Sergia Paula, probably a sister or daughter of the Governor of Galatia, Sergius Paulus (junior), who put up a monument of himself in Antioch.<sup>4</sup>

Another incscription at Karavalasi, on the North coast of Cyprus, mentions Sergius Paulus (senior) as pro-Consul at Cyprus.

In the neighbourhood also there are stone quarries which belonged to the Emperor, and were managed by his own officials. Every block of marble, when approved fit for exportation to Rome, was marked *probandi* (approved);

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii., 38.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. vi., 12.

<sup>3</sup> Luke ii., 2.

<sup>4</sup> Journal of Roman Studies 1913, p. 262; 1914, p. 254.

those rejected were marked with the letters—*reprobanti* (rejected). St. Peter quoting the words from Ps. cxviii., about the stone which the builders rejected, uses the word rejection which the Romans used, i.e., “rejected,” instead of that which meant “despised.”

### SARDIS.

Going due West we must enter the important province of Lydia, where most of the seven churches of Asia are situated. As our space will not admit of our dealing with all, we can only visit one or two. The capital of Lydia was Sardis, situated at the Northern foot of Mount Tmolus, the height of its situation, gave it the appearance of a *citadel* rather than a *city*. As a matter of fact, it ultimately became a citadel, when the new city was built lower down. Its precipitous sides made it inaccessible excepting on the South, where a narrow ridge joined it to the mountain. The King of Sardis, Cræsus, was a great patron of learning. Aesop was one of his protégés. Cræsus thought himself the happiest of mortals, secure in his city, surrounded by wise courtiers. Solon, one of the seven wise men of Greece, is said to have rebuked his self satisfaction, and to have said “Regard no man happy until the end of life have set him free from sudden reverses.” But Cræsus could not dream of reverses, so he paid no heed to this wise advice, nor even repaired the little breach made in the citadel by the storms of centuries! In 549, B.C., Cyrus, king of

Persia, besieged Sardis and found it impregnable to capture by assault. But once when there were no sentinels on watch, a Lydian soldier in the pay of Cyrus, climbed, in the dead of night, through the oblique crevice in the perpendicular rock, and delivered the citadel into the hands of the Persians. So Sardis was caught napping! When our Lord addresses the Church of Sardis, He says, "Be watchful and strengthen things which remain . . . if therefore thou shalt not watch I will come on thee as a thief."<sup>1</sup> Sybele was the supreme goddess and patron of the city. The ruins of her Temple from the 3rd Century B.C., with its fine Doric ornamentation, are still magnificent even in their fallen state. The building was of pure marble, 120 feet  $\times$  350 feet, with twenty massive columns on either side. Two of these are still standing, and are about 50 feet high. The worship, like that of the rest of Anatolian religion, was the worship of nature, its motto was apparently "living." Nature, subject to death, yet never dying. Before the Temple door are two words, "Light and Life." Another inscription is "Living." Christ, addressing the Church says "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."<sup>2</sup>

The Corporation of the city had an official list of citizens. Any one who was degraded by crime had his name expunged from the Citizens List. The disgrace of this punishment was such that few cared to incur it. Our Saviour addressing these people of Sardis, says, "I will not blot out his name

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iii., 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. iii., 1.





Ancient Ruins of Ephesus.



out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels."

Two of the chief industries of the city were the manufacture of woollen goods, and dyeing. In religious ceremonies, and also at public rejoicings, the inhabitants wore white linen. According to votive inscription in Asia Minor, the worshippers honoured the deity by wearing white, because dark colours were the symbols of guilt and sorrow. So we have the words "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment."<sup>1</sup> The same thought is evident in the Apocalyptic writings of Enoch, "The elect will be clothed after the resurrection in eternal garments of glory."<sup>2</sup>

### EPHESUS.

The plateau of Western Anatolia is dissected by four valleys, which extend to the sea coast, one of which leads us to *Ephesus*. Situated three miles from the sea, in a rich plain, it was a magnificent city, the capital of the Roman Province of Asia. To-day its immense ruins are marked by a little place called Ayasoluk, a corruption of Hagios Theologos, (the Holy Theologian), in memory of St. John the Divine, who, according to tradition, spent the latter part of his life there. Ephesus was a most important centre, with a road sweeping down from the Eastern uplands, and a harbour and sea route connecting it with Europe—

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iii., 5.

<sup>2</sup> Enoch lxii., 16.

thus it was central between two continents. The importance of Ephesus was enhanced by the concourse of pilgrims, coming to visit the shrine of Diana, from a great part of the world. What Jerusalem was to the Jew, Ephesus was to the Roman world. St. Paul at once recognised its strategical value, so he spent two years in missionary labours, in the city. Most probably the seven churches of Asia owed their foundation to St. Paul's labours here, as the trade route connected them all with Ephesus. Proceeding along the arched road lined with monumental buildings, which leads from the harbour, we reach the Theatre. This was of immense size, the Orchestra alone was 80 by 37 feet, with footlights, and supported by twenty six round pillars and tensquare ones. The seats were placed tier upon tier, with twelve "thrones" for eminent visitors, and could accommodate twenty-five thousand people! Though so vast in size, the acoustic property was such that a whisper could be heard. The Theatre, besides its use for dramatic performances, was also a place for public assemblies. It was here the mob rushed St. Paul's companions, and St. Paul, not wishful to leave them in the lurch, sought to enter also, but was prevented by his friends lest he should be torn to pieces.<sup>1</sup> A mob such as this was called in the language of Plato "wild beasts," a similar expression is used by Ignatius in describing his journey to Rome for martyrdom. when he says he was "bound to ten leopards" (soldiers).

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix., 29, 31.

Very probably, St. Paul is referring to this mob when he says he fought with "beasts" at Ephesus. Whilst the mob was fanatically furious outside the theatre, the beautiful Temple of Diana, standing higher up with the mountains as a background, caught their gaze, and they burst into the formula "Great is Diana of the Ephesians"—A prayer, not a mere asseveration.

The road leading to the Temple passed through the Magnesium Gate, which was 35 feet wide, and had three openings, two for vehicles and one for pedestrians. It was paved with marble, and here and there were porticos for sheltering the pilgrims on their way to and from the Temple. This Temple was one of the seven wonders of the world. "The sun" so the saying ran, "saw nothing in his course more magnificent than the Temple of Diana." It was octagonal in shape, 340 feet by 160 feet, built of white, blue and yellow marble. Gold instead of mortar was used to fill up the joinings of the marble, and fluted columns adorned its interior.

The temple of Artemis (Diana) was built by the contributions, not only of the Provinces of Asia, but also by those from Rome, Greece, Gaul, Spain, Syria, and even from the Crimea:<sup>1</sup> therefore nearly all the world resorted to it for worship, "Whom all Asia and the world worshipped."<sup>2</sup> The Ephesians are described, not only as the worshippers, but as the "wardens" or "vergers" of

<sup>1</sup> Pliny Nat. Hist. 1640.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xix., 27.

the Temple.<sup>1</sup> The vergers in the Greek Church and the Jewish Synagogue in Egypt still bear this title (Neskoras). It has also been found on coins, and in two inscriptions which have come down to us from the time of St. Paul. The principle industry of the city was that of making *shrines*. There were miniature Temples, with the statue of the goddess within. Some were made of stone, iron, and terra cotta, to suit the purses of the poorer pilgrims, but most were made of silver. But besides these shrines, small statues and charms were carved in ivory and bronze, and also small images of Artemis were made. A wealthy man, Gaius Vibuis, in the time of St. John, spent £2,000,000 on such articles, and some of his images in silver weighed 7 lbs. each. Many of these objects have been discovered amongst the ruins of Ephesus. These shrines, etc., had many uses; they were worn as amulets especially when journeying, or buried with the dead to protect them; some were worn as ornaments only, whilst others were set up as a family altar in the homes. So this was a very lucrative industry to Ephesian craftsmen.

St. Paul, when preaching against the worship of Artemis, indirectly touched the pockets—the susceptible parts—of these workers, and we read that Demetrius, (a common name in inscriptions), who was probably the Master of that guild that year, raised an uproar against St. Paul.

In ordinary Roman colonies such as Philippi, Roman

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix., 35.

Law was administered by Roman Prætores (or magistrates). But Ephesus was a free city, and therefore had beside the Pro-consul, (Prætor) the popular Assembly or Ecclesia, which met three times a year, under the control of its own judges. Any extraordinary meeting of this body could only be called by the Pro-consul. The chief man of the Province was called Asiarch and next to him was the Clerk, the Secretary of the city; this was a post of importance. It was his work to arrange matters between the Roman Pro-consul and the City Assembly, to propose and draft bills, and to act as Treasurer for the city. St. Paul was evidently a friend of the Asiarch, who had the supervision of Emperor worship, and it was the Secretary who appeared and dismissed the crowd.<sup>1</sup>

Ephesus was also famous for its art of Magic. Certain formulæ were known as 'Ephesian letters' and there were plenty of exorcists. The Magic consisted in the recitation<sup>2</sup> of certain names and incantations. It was used to obtain salvation, comfort in trouble, success in love affairs, and even to modify the course of nature. We are told that as a result of St. Paul's preaching many who used 'curious arts,' brought their books and burned them before him.<sup>3</sup>

### SMYRNA.

Before leaving Asia Minor we must not omit a brief visit to *Smyrna*, not so much on account of its antiquity

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix., 31; Acts xix., 35—41.   <sup>2</sup> Acts xx., 14.   <sup>3</sup> Acts xix., 19.

or beauty, but because it links up the apostolic time with that of the following centuries. Smyrna was the home of St. Polycarp, who flourished in the 2nd Century A.D. He was an intimate friend of the beloved disciple St. John, and also of others who had heard the teaching and seen the miracles of the Lord. Irenæus also was born and brought up in Smyrna and was a pupil of Polycarp, who taught him those things which he had himself heard from St. John and other disciples. Subsequently Irenæus went to Rome as a Teacher, and became Bishop of Lyons in Gaul A.D. 177. There he introduced the liturgy drawn up by St. John for the Church at Ephesus, and which was later on adopted as the liturgy of the British Church ! Thus Smyrna may be looked upon not only as a link between the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic time, but also as a link between the Eastern and Western churches, and the teaching of St. John was transmitted direct to Polycarp, and from him by means of Irenæus, as far as Britain !<sup>1</sup>

St. John, when writing to the seven Churches of Asia, pictures the little church at Smyrna as true to its Faith, and finds no glaring fault as he had found in the case of the other six : this is the only city which remains to our own day, with a large population. St. John shows an intimate knowledge of the history of the city. There were many Jews living in Smyrna in his time, who were bitterly opposed to Christianity ; he speaks of them as ' No Jews,

<sup>1</sup> C. R. Lane " Eng. Ch. Hist." p. 9.



but of the Synagogue of Satan.' At the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, these Jews showed most ferocious cruelty. The people of Smyrna were proud of the beauty of the city, with its fine outlook on the blue waters of the Ægean Sea, and its background of hills and the distant range of Tmolus. The city climbed up the slopes of the steep hill Pagos, the summit of which was called the 'crown' of the city, and where was the citadel, or Acropolis; the inhabitants were proud of this crown. Aelius Aristides, who lived in Smyrna for many years, likened the city to the crown of Ariadne, shining in the heavenly constellation. Apollonius of Tyane, speaking of Smyrna says, "It is a greater charm to wear a crown of man, than one of porticos and gold, for a city is seen only in its own place, but man everywhere." Referring to this crown, our Saviour promises a Crown of Life, far better than the crown of a city! Through St. John He says to the Church in Smyrna, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." The people of Smyrna were celebrated for their fidelity to international treaties, and to any alliances they formed. Livy calls them 'the most faithful.'<sup>1</sup> They entered into an alliance with Rome as far back as B.C.195. In a great life and death struggle between Rome and the barbarian, Smyrna proved faithful to her ally. On one occasion the citizens stripped themselves of their own garments to send them to Roman soldiers who were suffering

<sup>1</sup> Livy xxxviii., xxxix.

from cold in the winter campaign. The Saviour addressing the Christians of Smyrna says "Be faithful!" Another characteristic of the people of Smyrna was that of being the *first* and the *last* in everything.<sup>1</sup> They are likened to the Homeric hero whom nothing would satisfy, except being *first* and best of all. Strabo calls them 'first in the splendour of their city.'<sup>2</sup> Homer was claimed as a citizen of Smyrna and a 'Homereion' was built in his honour; they claimed him as the *best* and *foremost* of poets. They strove to convince the Senate of Rome that they were the *first* people to rear a temple to the city of Rome. So Christ reminded them that He is the "First and the Last."

Our tour has already extended beyond its proposed limits but as there are yet two important cities in the West which were visited by St. Paul, i.e., Athens and Corinth, we yield to the desire to include them in our journey.

Since the year 1846 numerous Archæological Schools, by means of the spade, have conjured up the conditions of things current in these two cities in the time of St. Paul.

Leaving Smyrna, we skirt the coast line of the Ægean Sea northwards, and arrive at *Troas*, the sea port for Europe, which tradition identified with ancient Troy; on this account the Romans lavished much wealth on it, as the cradle of their race, and Cæsar even had thoughts of making Troas the capital of the Empire, instead of Rome. It is now in ruins, and is known as Eski Stambul;

<sup>1</sup> "Kiad" vi., 208.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo. xiv.

the ruined walls are 6 miles in circumference. St. Paul visited the city three times, and it was his starting point for Europe. He says 'crossing from Troas we came with a straight course, (a southerly wind which would be in his favour) to Samothracia, a three days' voyage.' Samothrace was an island which rose to a height of 5,240ft. above sea level, 30 miles from the coast, and was a conspicuous feature in the Northern Ægean. Accompanying St. Paul, we touch the first European soil the next day at Neapolis, now a small Turkish village called Kavallo, where many Latin inscriptions have been recently discovered. From Neapolis, after a journey of 10 miles, we reach the town of Philippi, a Roman colony which played a great part in the Republican Wars. Amphipolis was the capital of the district in which Philippi was situated, but recent inscriptions tell us, that though Philippi was not the capital, the citizens, with their Roman privileges, styled their city 'the first city' in the province. Some hold that St. Luke was a native of Philippi, and so speaks of that city, according to the custom of the people, as, 'the chief city of that part of Macedonia.'<sup>1</sup> Many inscriptions indicate the presence of numbers of Jews there: it was customary for the Jews of the Dispersion to hold their services in the open air by the river side: this was done either for the easier performance of Levitical ablutions, or as a refuge from the tainted heathen idolatry of the centre of the city.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi., 12.

<sup>2</sup> Philo Flaccum, i., v.

The Jews, in their Dispersion, always sought the purest spot for their worship. Plutarch says 'Pythian' was a name assumed by a medium or ventriloquist, who was popularly regarded as inspired by Pythian Apollo.<sup>1</sup> We meet here a damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.

### THESSALONICA.

Leaving Philippi, we press on towards Thessalonica, following the road known as Via Egnatia; on this route lie Amphipolis and Apollonia; the former is now called Neochori and the latter Pollina. Thessalonica, the modern Salonica, was a fine and important city, well situated both for defence and commerce, and this latter fact attracted a great number of Jews. Philo evidences the number and influence of these Jews in his version of an Epistle of Agrippa to Caligula. Their open hostility to St. Paul obliged him to leave the city. To-day nearly half of the population are Jews. St. Luke calls the magistrates of the city 'Politarchs.'<sup>2</sup> This title has never been found in the writings of any classical author. Hence St. Luke's reputation as an accurate historian, was discredited. But now comes an inscription on a marble archway, probably erected in the time of Vespasian, and still spanning a street of the modern city which begins with the word Politarchs and is followed by the names of seven magis-

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch de Def. Orac. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvii., 6.

trates. Here Archæology discredits rather the findings of the Higher Critic, than those of St. Luke, and establishes his accuracy !

Proceeding from Thessalonica we reach Berea, 50 miles away ; it was a beautiful city of South Macedonia, on the lower slopes of Mount Bernois, and commanded an extensive view. The river Haliacman, breaking through the Olympian range, amply irrigated the town, turning it into a most beautiful garden. The modern city Kara Berra is still the pleasantest town in Rumili. Berea was an out of the way place, away from the turmoil of cities, in the quietude of the country. So St Paul found it a quiet retreat, and probably remained here some time, in the hope of resuming his labours in Thessalonica ; he found the inhabitants willing learners. Probably the success of his mission at Berea reached the ears of his enemies at Thessalonica, and emissaries from that city soon made it impossible for him to remain at Berea.

#### ATHENS.

So leaving Silas and Timotheos there, he made his way down to the sea. Though St. Luke does not mention at which port St. Paul embarked for Athens, there is reason to believe that it was at the harbour of Dium, a great bulwark of the maritime frontier of South Macedonia. Sailing by that lovely coast, amid scenes vivid with heroic memories, with poetry, his-

tory, philosophy and romance on every side, we pass by Olympus, Marathon and Thermopylæ; on the third morning we see, as the cloud on the horizon disappears, headlands and cliffs, and, like a delicate lace work against the blue, the white buildings of a city. *This is Athens!* The home of Beauty, Literature, Art and Culture, the famous and glorious city. The Piræus, its harbour, five miles distant, was connected with it by a long wall. The many Archæological schools, English, French, and others, which have been established in Athens since the year 1846, have restored to us, in a measure, the city of Plato and Paul. No city in the world has yielded such a rich harvest in Archæological discoveries as Athens and today we have not only a true picture of a city of philosophers, but of the city and environments of the days of St. Paul. The accuracy of the historians' account of St. Paul's visit to Athens, is forcibly corroborated. Athens, built in the plains of Attica, faces Southward towards the sea; it had three great ports Piræus, Munychia, and Phalarum. East, North, and West, three high mountains 3,000 feet to 4,000 feet in height, bounded the city. This city, as large as Rome, was 26 miles in circumference, and formed a huge shrine. If Palestine be called the Holy Land, this surely was the Holy land of ideals, the home of Art, and Philosophy. Looking up from the Piræus gate, the first thing which caught the eye was the Temple of Athens on the Acropolis, with its magnificent statue of the Goddess of



Wisdom. Walking towards the Acropolis, the streets were lined with altars and statues of silver and white marble, and even the courtyards of houses were ornamented with them. Passing by the Hamaxithos road we see altars erected to "unknown gods." It was a satire of Theon's that it was easier to find a god than a man in Athens!"<sup>1</sup> The present excavations prove how numerous were the altars and idols 2,000 years ago. The fine temple of Theseum, South of the Acropolis, was dedicated to Hephæstus, the divine smith. On the slopes of the Acropolis, was the outdoor theatre of Dionysius, which accommodated 30,000 people. A little way to the north was the Stadium of the Panathenaic games, which provided accommodation for 50,000 spectators, and St. Paul may have watched some of the Grecian games here. Lying to the N.W. of the Stadium, stood the Lyceum with its shady woods and beautiful gardens, where Aristotle taught. The Academy of Plato was by the groves of Cephissus; in the valley between the Acropolis and the Areopagus, was the famous Agora, or market place. Unlike the many market places familiar to us, this one was similar to the Piazza di Marco of Venice; it was surrounded by porticos of great beauty, and rich in noble statues. On the West of the Agora was the Stoa Poikile, whence the Stoics received their name, and it was here that students of philosophy met for discussion. It became the centre of Athenian life. Demosthenes pictured

<sup>1</sup> Parisonnaus i., 4.

the Athenians bustling about the Agora, and enquiring "if any new thing is being told." Thucydides made Cleon say "You being slaves of every new paradox, in a word you are overpowered by the pleasures of the ear, and are like men sitting to be amused by rhetoricians." It was here that Socrates reasoned with the Athenians on the subject "What is Truth." It was to this spot that St. Paul came to discuss with them, and to reason in the same manner, that "*Jesus was the Truth.*" The Athenians probably did not take St. Paul, in his Jewish garb, to be a *philosopher*, but merely a *newsmonger*; and they said, "What doth this *babbler* say?" *Babbler* was a slang word meaning a "picker of scraps." Neither did they understand his teaching, but spoke of him as they had of Socrates, as "a setter forth of strange gods." When St. Paul preached Jesus and the Resurrection, it sounded in their language as though he was setting up two new gods for their devotions. Here he encountered the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. These courteous polished Athenians, did not lay sudden hands upon him, as the Jews of other places had done, but led him with great politeness up the sixteen steps to the Areopagus. This was the venerable Court of Athens, where all matters connected with religion and education were supervised. Here St. Paul was not on his trial as a criminal, but for the purpose of giving further details of his teaching.

## DIPLOMACY OF ST. PAUL.

We have in St. Paul the ideal missionary. His speech ought to be studied by every missionary and religious teacher, and used as a model of missionary method and preaching. He was consumed with a passion for God's honour. When St. Paul walked by the magnificent altars and statues, we read *his spirit was stirred within him*. Renan says "The ugly Jew had no taste for beauty." But these words indicate that he was burning with passion—he was jealous for the honour and glory of his Master, and felt that God's glory was usurped by the mythological gods and goddesses of Athens. He had also conceived a great passion for souls, just as his Master had showed when He wept over Jerusalem, yearning with a deep solicitude for their salvation. Though filled with zeal, he conducts himself calmly as a good statesman should, and shows wonderful strategy. When we read that he was burning with passion, because the city was given to idolatry, we also read that he entered the *Jewish* synagogue, not to dispute, but to reason with *them*, about the Lord Jesus.

Recent discoveries show us that there were many Jews in Athens, and their Synagogue might have been in the Agora, as it is today. One might have thought that St. Paul would have reasoned with the *Greeks* straight away, instead of with the Jews, but he knew well that the Jews were the pivot of religion, that they were set aside by God as a

great religious agency, and that the blessing of the Jew would be the blessing of the Gentile—and that the Jews occupied a strategic point in the conquest of the Gentile world. So St. Paul's motto as a wise builder and strategist was "to the Jews first."

### ADAPTABILITY.

We see also his adaptability ; he aims at obtaining the confidence of his audience. When addressing Jews in Jerusalem, he talks as a Jew—"Men and brethren." Here he speaks as an *Athenian*, as Demosthenes would have done. "Men of Athens." He gets still more attention when he quotes their poets. They could see that St. Paul was neither an exorcist, or a picker up of scraps of news, or an ordinary trading Jew, but a man of learning and refinement, which fact would greatly appeal to them.

### TACT.

Again St. Paul was a man of tact. When he sees the objects of their devotion, and the altars to the *unknown* god, instead of harshly blaming them, and finding fault, he says, "I see you are superstitious," that is, you are "religious." He was not walking on the slippery path of compromise here, he well realised the nothingness of the idols, but he could see the groping of the human heart, and he would not quench the smoking flax, offensive though it was, but like the Master, he would fan it into a flame for

the worship of the true God. Also—St. Paul had a knowledge of his audience, like a doctor feeling the pulse, and dealing with his patient accordingly. The first group he addresses was the general public of Athens who had a great propensity to polytheism. St. Paul the monotheist tells them of the unknown God, Who made the world and all things therein, and Who is the Lord of heaven and earth. Being such, He cannot be immured or confined in temples or statues of men's work, In this St. Paul would have the support of the Stoic philosophers who said, "The world is a temple of immortal gods; temples are not to be built of stone for them."<sup>1</sup> St. Paul urges them to seek this God of heaven, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him; "haply" should be rendered "indeed" for it was God's purpose that they should find Him. That they worshipped the "unknown" god proved that they had not yet succeeded in doing so. The Athenians were wrong, not only in their conception of God, but also in their idea of the unity of the human race. They called themselves Auto Chthonos, meaning that they were produced from the ground of their own country, and were a separate race, and never mixed with other nations. This was the foundation of their characteristic natural pride. So St. Paul preaching first the monotheism of God, adds also, that we are all His offspring, the children of one Father. "He hath made of one blood *all nations* of men." He now turns

<sup>1</sup> Seneca Frag., 113.

from the Athenians to the Epicurean philosophers, the Sadducees of Athens. They were free thinkers who did not actually deny the existence of the gods, but banished them to the very remote regions of the Universe, and said "The gods do not live in this or any other world, but in the intermediate space between world and world. No benefit is to be expected from their favour, nor is any punishment to be dreaded from their anger, but they live solely for their own enjoyment." They denied not only the immanence and providence of the gods, but also the immortality of the soul, saying that death was the end of all. Their missionary zeal, as expressed by Lucretius, was to free men from the fear of the world to come, by denying its existence! They recognised no duties save those which ministered to their own pleasure, for to the Epicurean pleasure was the supreme good, and pain the sole evil. Here then St. Paul, in dealing with the Epicurean tenets of belief, gives us the philosophy of history as regards the immanence, providence, and purpose of God. He says God made the world and all that is therein, and hath determined the time before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. He (God) is not far from every one of us. God has not only made the world, but His providence operates in the affairs of men. People do not come to their lot by chance, but to the habitations God has designed for them. Again, God has not only determined man's habitation but also the duration of their time. Now He sets up kings and multi-



plies nations, now He puts them down and diminishes the people, with the view of leading them to feel after Him ; God does not only work in the history of man, but also in their *hearts* ; as the wise men of Israel said, “ God put eternity in the heart of man.”<sup>1</sup> God thus distinguishes man in His Creation from other creatures, implanting this immortal instinct, or God consciousness within him, that he might seek Him and find Him. The ultimate purpose of the whole creation is God’s glorification and man’s salvation. Up to this point the Stoic philosophers—the Pharisees of Athens—one class of St. Paul’s audience—were able to agree with his exposure of the errors of the general public, and of Epicurean philosophers ; they believed in the brotherhood of man, and the immanence of God in the Universe, only, theirs was a God of Pantheism, not a distinct person, ruler of the universe, but a *part of the universe* pervading all things. As Epictatus said “ We are fragments of God,” and as Seneca would say “ God is near you and within you, the Holy Spirit sits within us, watcher of our good and evil deeds.”<sup>2</sup> They believed also that the spirits, the best and wisest, survived the body, and became dæmones, but they could not hold the resurrection of the body, nor the eternity of these dæmones. The Stoics had no conception of sin, nor of future judgment ; so St. Paul announces repentance, and judgment to come, and Jesus and His Resurrection. These facts startled the Stoics,

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. iii., 2, R.V.<sup>2</sup> Seneca Epist. 212, 2.

some jeered and mocked, others desired to hear him again on the subject. St. Paul's preaching at Athens is considered by some to have been an utter failure, and others aver it to have been attended with only partial success. We, on the contrary, think that it was very successful. It is recorded that, at the conclusion of his sermon, "Certain men clave unto him and believed, amongst the which was Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them." Dionysius according to Eusebius, was a member of the Council of the Greek assembly, a man of distinction, who probably became Bishop of Athens subsequently.<sup>1</sup>

The Church of Athens was so prosperous that Origen could give it as his proof of the fruit of Christianity in his reply to Celsus, an Athenian philosopher who had written against Christianity A.D. 178.

It was the Christian School of Athens that trained two great pillars of the Eastern Church, St. Basil and St. Gregory.

It was Aristides the Athenian Philosopher, who wrote the first Apology of the Church! One most interesting discovery at Athens was that of a tombstone in the form of a statuette of our Saviour as the Good Shepherd, dating about A.D. 300.

#### CORINTH.

Leaving Athens and taking a southerly course, we reach Corinth, a city of Achaia, which St. Paul visited. During the last 18 centuries it has dwindled into insignificance,

<sup>1</sup> Euse. Hist. iii., 4, 10.

and was finally destroyed by an earthquake in 1858. But the spirit of Archæology has again resuscitated much of it for us. The American School of Archæology at Athens especially has done good work.

The city occupied a commanding position at the Southern extremity of the narrow isthmus which joined the Peloponnesus to the mainland of Greece ; sea being on either side. Ovid calls the city "Corinth on the two seas." Its position gave it a unique advantage for commerce, situated thus between the Adriatic and Aegean Sea, the Western harbour commanded all merchandise as far as Spain, and the Eastern harbour, likewise, as far as Egypt. She became a great emporium between the East and the West, and the home of many merchant princes. The city heaped up riches and was eventually called "Corinth the prosperous."

To the North, the steep rock called Acrocorinth, or the citadel, rose to a height of 2,000 feet and served the double purpose of defence and picturesqueness. The wealth of Corinth led to great luxurious excess and extravagance. A population of 200,000 had a quarter of a million slaves ! At last her riches and her vices became proverbial.

About the time of St. Paul's visit, the Jews, according to Suetonius, were expelled from Rome by order of Claudius. Amongst these refugees were Aquila and Priscilla. A recent inscription in Rome mentions the name Aquilina. There must have been at this time a large number of Jews living

at Corinth. A door lintel was discovered on the main road leading to the city from the harbour, bearing an inscription of the imperial period, "The Synagogue of the Hebrews." Prof. Deissmann holds the opinion that this was probably the one in which St. Paul preached.<sup>1</sup> It was at Corinth that the Jews dragged him before Gallio, the Governor of the city. A fragmentary inscription recently discovered at Delphi, contains a letter of the Emperor Claudius, appointing Gallio, the brother of Seneca, to be the Governor at Corinth between the summers 51 and 52 A.D. This inscription is of great importance, for besides confirming historically the governorship of Gallio, it indirectly gives us the date of St. Paul's arrival at Corinth, and also the date of his conversion on the way to Damascus. Taking the dates given by him prior to his Corinth visit, it places his conversion within a year or two of the death and resurrection of the Saviour.

Although the population of Corinth was composed of Romans and various Asiatic races, Greeks formed the majority, and their influence predominated the whole city. One of their many traits, which is still their curse, was the spirit of faction, which always put *persons* before *principles*, and which could never realise national or political unity. This factious spirit even showed itself in the Christian Church of Corinth. So St. Paul writes, "Every one of you saith, 'I am of Paul, and I of Cephas, and I of Apollos.'" <sup>2</sup> Clement of Rome, writing years afterwards to the Corinthian

<sup>1</sup> Acts. xviii., 1.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i., 12.

Church exhorts them to "unity and concord, who were divided by many factions." Another characteristic was, and is today, the inclination to engage in law suits, and contest matters in the law courts. This spirit manifested itself in the infant church. The Jewish community were allowed to settle disputes among themselves in their own law courts, but were forbidden to go before heathen magistrates. "Whosoever goeth before the impious . . . hath lifted up his hand against the laws of Moses,"<sup>1</sup> said one of the Jewish writers. So St. Paul condemns the practise of resorting to heathen courts.

In the North East of the city are the magnificent remains of the Temple of Poseidon, to which the vast stadium for the great Isthmian games was attached. These games were a part of Hellenic life and culture. Many inscriptions have been discovered which give details of the foot races and boxing contests. Near by were many evergreen trees—firs, laurels, etc., from which the crowns were made for the victors. No doubt St. Paul, during his eighteen months sojourn in the city, took note of all these things and borrowed some of his figures of speech from them.<sup>2</sup> Corinth was one of the great strongholds of heathenism and immorality. St. Paul says, "I was with you in fear and in much trembling."<sup>3</sup> Here was Christianity versus paganism, in its blackest dye. The Pagan religion was patronised by the State, and its traditions were well embedded in hoary

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor., vi.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ix., 24—26.<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii., 3.

antiquity. The architecture of the temples was very wonderful, the work of ancient sculptors and artists, and the services were of an ornate and splendid nature. The gods and goddesses, besides being links with the immortal past, were many of them, regarded as great benefactors, who conferred upon their devotees the arts of farming, healing, and so forth. So we can well imagine the firm hold it had upon the popular mind. Besides this, there was no real association of morals with religion. The old stories were full of the adventures of Jupiter (Zeus), with heroines or mortal women whom he loved. Of nineteen hundred wall paintings at Pompeii, some fourteen hundred represent mythological subjects, largely the stories of the passions of Jupiter. Terence, the Latin dramatist, pictured a young man looking at one of these, and saying to himself "If Jupiter did it, why should not I?"

Here, in Corinth, was the temple of the God of Wine, and the statue of a nymph struggling to free herself from the unholy clutches of the intoxicated deity. Besides many shrines of foreign gods and goddesses such as Serapis, Isis, etc., the most formidable of all was the one for the worship of Aphrodite. Her temple crowned the highest eminence of the citadel. Though she appears in the guise of a Greek name as the goddess of love, she really was the Syrian Astarte whose worship was introduced into Corinth by the Phœnicians. There were in this temple over a thousand priestesses, whose immoral practices attracted men



from all parts of the world. Strabo, says Corinth became proverbial for its wickedness and profligacy, and the phrase, "to live like a Corinthian,"<sup>1</sup> was a synonym for abandonment and immorality. It was here in this city that St. Paul drew that black picture of heathendom, in the latter part of the first chapter of Romans. Here on the one hand he pictures the hideousness of the power of the demon, on the other he sets in contrast the power of the Gospel and describes it (as in the Greek) as Divine Dynamite.<sup>2</sup> Here are the two great forces struggling for mastery. In speaking of this great contest at Corinth to the Romans, he says, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Here St. Paul recognises sin, not as a mere human weakness or momentary forgetfulness, but as a pervading and abounding power; and grace as a still more pervading and more abounding power, which ultimately overthrows the powers of darkness. A Christian inscription found on a piece of marble on the way up towards the citadel, reads, "Demetrias, servant of Christ." Very many of the servants of luxury and vice, became the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ; amongst these are many Roman names, such as Lucius, Tertius, etc., and some occupied prominent positions, such as did Erastus, who was the city Treasurer. St. Paul writing to the Church of Corinth some years afterwards, referring to the moral condition of the Corinthians, says "Such were some of you, but ye were

<sup>1</sup> Strabo viii., ch. vi. p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i., 16.

washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified.”<sup>1</sup> Corinth subsequently became the great centre of light and leading in the continent of Europe.

#### LITERATURE.

Ramsay.—“St. Paul the Traveller.”

A. Deissmann.—“St. Paul.”

Murray’s Handbook of Asia Minor.

Ramsay’s “Historical Geography of Asia Minor.”

„ “The Teaching of St. Paul in terms of the present day.”

„ “The Bearing of Recent Researches on the Trustworthiness of The New Testament.”

„ Letters to the Seven Churches.

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Hogarth.—“Excavations in Ephesus.”

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F. T. Wood.—“Journal of Hellenistic Studies,” xv., 1-24, 70.

<sup>1</sup> Cor. vi., 2—11.

## CHAPTER VI

### The New Testament and Criticism

THERE is obviously great obscurity in the minds of people regarding the use and abuse of Criticism. Whilst many look upon it as the sum of all wisdom and a source of blessing, others regard it as the veritable work of the evil one. It is a curious fact that in the one month of October (1919)<sup>1</sup> numerous publications reached us, in which these conflicting views were expressed with much earnestness. Bishop Ryle, Dean of Westminster, an exponent of Higher Criticism, writing in the *Expository Times*, says of Biblical "Criticism," it contributed to the transformation of educated English opinion upon the subject of the structure and contents of the Jewish Scriptures. . . . In the learned world a revolution has taken place, the so-called 'critical' position has been universally accepted and generally adopted in the Universities. . . . The great majority of the people receive their notions about the Holy Scriptures, from devout persons who never read an article of Hastings'

<sup>1</sup> *Ex. Times*, Oct. '19, p. 7, 10.

Dictionary of the Bible, and have never heard of Dr. Driver's Literature of the Old Testament. They still receive instruction from Class Teachers, who have been trained on antiquated lines. The ordinary layman assumes that what he was taught as a child about the Bible is Christian Truth, and that no departure from it is justifiable. . . This is very largely responsible for the alienation from religion of which we hear and see so much." At the same time Dr. Weston, the Bishop of Zanzibar, of Kikuyu fame, in his newly published book, "Christ and His Critics," strongly suspects the Critical and Liberal Teachers of apostasy and heresy, and does not even spare some of his fellow Bishops of the Liberal School. He declares—"Jesus, as the Liberals know him, is not the Jesus I know. The Jesus of the Liberals, and my Jesus, have nothing in common, but the name!" The American "Sunday School Times," gives, in one of the October numbers, a lesson cartoon for the week—it is the figure of a learned gentleman, labelled "Infidelity," wearing a mask bearing the words, "Higher Criticism."<sup>1</sup> The words "Speaking of casting out devils, here is one that ought to be cast out bodily," give expression to the lesson of the picture. But there are a great number of devout people, like Dr. W. J. Beecher, who feel there is room for reasonable, reverential, and constructive criticism. In the midst of these conflicting views, there is urgent need of a definition of its real meaning and scope.

<sup>1</sup> S.S. Times, Oct. 19th, p. 553.

Obscurity partly arises from the modern use of the word Criticism. The original meaning of the Greek word was "scrutinise," and was equivalent to the word used by our Saviour when He said "Search the Scriptures."<sup>1</sup> It is used by St. Luke, in the sense of examining and sifting the Scriptures ; in speaking of the Bereans "They searched (Gr. scrutinised) the Scriptures daily."<sup>2</sup> So we are allowed by the Word of God, and indeed enjoined, to criticize the Scriptures in the classical and Biblical meaning of the term. The Bible, as the embodiment of Divine Truth, neither shuns nor fears, but encourages, reverent research. It is a Socratic principle, that an unexamined life or book is not worth having. We fear the word Criticise has acquired a new meaning, i.e., *censure*, instead of *scrutiny*. This is the meaning without doubt which is popularly accepted to-day, but with respect to its use for the Divine Revelation, it amounts to sacrilege. So while there *is* room for scrutiny, there is *none* for criticism.

There are two kinds of Criticism, Lower and Higher, or Textual and Historical.

### LOWER OR TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

Textual Criticism is concerned entirely with the *words* of the New Testament. We have already mentioned that we have not the original copy of the New Testament ; but we have thousands of manuscripts, copied by people at

<sup>1</sup> Jno. v., 39.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvii., 11.

various times, and in various places ; hence there are a variety of readings, and there is the need of long and arduous scrutiny before we can arrive at the Epistles and Gospels of the New Testament, as they left the hands of the original authors.

The omissions and additions of many of these various readings were *quite unintentional*. They arose in copying. Some times two lines ending in the same syllable led to the omission of the second line, some mistakes arose from wrong spellings, some owing to the slovenliness of the copyist : especially so when the copying was done by slaves, who, according to Diocletian law, could only charge 1/- for 100 lines.

#### THERE WERE ALSO INTENTIONAL FAULTS.

When a copyist undertook, as was done sometimes, to improve a supposed mistake, and simplify what seemed a difficulty ; or to put a finish to an abrupt ending, sometimes a word was added or subtracted by him to suit his own Church views. It is the colossal work of Scholars to discern how these various errors came in, and to study the local history of the various Churches, each in the light of its own dogmatic tendencies, and, besides sifting and examining thousands of Greek and Latin MSS, to examine the various Lectionaries, Versions, and Scriptural quotations of the Early Fathers.

This much needed examination has been the wondrous



work of many Scholars for many years past. Dr. Mulligan, a great expert on the subject says, " We may take it that in all substantial particulars the words of the original writers have been discovered. And today, owing to this work and labour of love, we have the New Testament as it left the hands of the original writers."

These Scholars have laid the whole Church of Christ under a deep obligation for this benefit ; and it should feel very thankful to God for such constructive and edifying scrutiny.

### HIGHER OR HISTORICAL CRITICISM.

Higher Criticism deals not with the text, but with the *subject matter*. We are sure that every Bible student would welcome such a study, producing as it does a useful historical Commentary on the Scriptures. But let us be quite sure that it is genuine history and science, and not man's religious predilections or half digested theories, substituted for them. Eichhorn, one of the pioneers of higher criticism, defines its function as " the discovery and verification of facts, regarding the origin, form, value, and literary production, upon the basis of their internal structure." We fear that many of the Higher Critics have brushed aside genuine history and science, and have walked in the broad way of unhistorical and unscientific criticism, which has led not to *construction*, but *disruption*, of the Scriptures.

But we must be careful not to daub all critics with one brush, for there are some who are carrying on the work of

scrutiny with reverence, and in a *constructive spirit*—there are others who may be called *destructive*, who range from the spirit of moderation, to that of negation, and unbelief. So that there is right and wrong, reasonable and unreasonable Historical Criticism.

We will take the following examples of *Wrong criticism* very briefly.

#### (A.)—CONJECTURAL CRITICISM.

This Criticism attempts to write the history of 2,000 years ago as it ought to be, from the point of view of the present day, and not altogether as it actually was at that time! Not so long ago certain historians had constructed the Greek history of B.C. 400, particularly with regard to the legislation of Draco and Solon: but in 1890 a precious document was discovered over 60 chapters in length, and written in several different hands on the back of papyri. The first part treated most carefully the provisions of the original Constitution of Athens, and the changes through which it had passed. The second part described the Constitution of Aristotle's day. It caused *much* surprise to modern scholars, because it gave a history of Athens which differed very much from that which they had constructed! Sir F. G. Kenyon who translated this ancient document in 1921, says "It tends to make us almost sceptical as to the value of most conjectural restorations of historic facts, either in Greek or in Hebrew history; so many evidently

reasonable theories and conjectures are scattered to the winds by these discoveries, that *reasonable caution is imposed for accepting similar plausible imaginations for the future.*"<sup>1</sup>

(B.)—COMPROMISING CRITICISM.

Prof. Cheyne, writing in his book "Founders of Old Testament Criticism," says of Eichhorn, one of the Founders, that it was his desire and hope to contribute to the winning back of the educated classes to religion ; and that therefore he had set himself to eliminate from the Bible everything to which rationalism could take exception. The 18th Century was an age of Rationalism and Atheism, with its Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Gibbon, etc. : Lessin, the prince of German prose writers, attempted to demolish Christianity ; and so German philosophy and Christian Scholarship came to her rescue, these, numbering amongst others Eichhorn and Kant, adopted the method of *compromise*. The Kantian philosophy had no Trinity, no Atonement, no working of the Holy Spirit, it was a soulless and lifeless religion.

In this kind of criticism there is no searching out, nor verification of facts ; and many critics of today still pursue this method.

Unlike St. Paul, the Apostle, who *dare* not preach any other Gospel than that of Christ Crucified, although to the

<sup>1</sup> "Aristotle & Athenian Constitution" F. G. Kenyon, p. 19.

Greek of his day it was *foolishness*, and to the Jew a *stumbling block*, these critics make light of the great cardinal doctrines of the Bible.

#### (C.)—DISHONEST CRITICISM.

Strauss, in his criticism of the New Testament, dates its writings A.D. 270, at the earliest ; nearly 200 years after the events recorded, had taken place. As soon as the book was published many of the able reviewers discovered that he had paid very little attention to the ~~text~~ of the New Testament ; and it also was his own subsequent confession, that he purposely put the date at so late a period, in order to undermine its authority, and thus be able to argue that events recorded in it were liable to misrepresentation, since so long had elapsed between the actual occurrences, and their record.

#### (D.)—MATERIALISTIC CRITICISM.

The dominance of gross materialism has been one of the greatest plagues of the West, in the last few centuries. Materialism doubts, or denies anything spiritual or supernatural, regardless of the findings of history or science. Prof. Jullucker discredits St. Mark's Gospel, on the ground that it contains records of miracles ! like Renan saying, " There is no room in the Gospel for the supernatural."

#### (E.)—PARTISAN CRITICISM.

A few years ago Prof. Harnack wrote a book, " What

is Christianity ? ” and he undertook to answer the question in a strictly historical manner. Such a treatment of the subject militated against the aftergrowth teachings of the Christian Church, and especially so in that of the Church of Rome. Loisy, the pioneer of the Modernists in the Romish Church, took Harnack’s book as a direct attack on his Church, and so wrote his counter attack called “ The Gospel and the Church.” Loisy, in order to defend his Church, began by denying the historicity of the Gospels, declaring that the Evangelists were neither eye witnesses, nor belonging to Palestine ; and that the Gospels were not written before A.D. 70.

A high dignitary of the Church of Rome, Mgr. Moyes, said that “ The Modernist denied the facts related in the Gospels, denied the Deity of the Saviour, and further denied that Christ personally instituted the Sacraments.”<sup>1</sup> Loisy was careful to declare just a germ in the Gospel narratives valid, out of which he allowed all the later practices of his church to evolve. Such an illogical perversity of reasoning was too much for even Pope Pius X., and on July 3rd, 1907, Loisy and his tenets were condemned by a Papal Encyclical. Despite this, the Modernist teaching has today many adherents amongst the priests of the Romish Church, both on the Continent and in England, and influences in a great measure even liberal Protestantism.

<sup>1</sup> 19th Cent., 1907.

## REVIEW OF SOME SALIENT POINTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

### THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

For over a Century there has been a somewhat heated controversy over the nature of the New Testament Greek. It was thought by many eminent writers that the Jewish Apostles, being drawn more or less from an illiterate class of men, had not been able to make use of literary Greek, but of a Greek which was compounded largely with Hebrew words and idioms.

So recently as 1889, Dr. Hatch, a great scholar, described the language of the New Testament, as "a language by itself, an exotic Jewish dialect."<sup>1</sup> In 1894, Dr. F. Blass, of Halle, agreed with this view.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Kennedy, in his "Sources of New Testament Greek," found 550 words to be Semitic and peculiar to the New Testament. But the discovery of numbers of papyri has exploded these clever speculations! According to the late Dr. Moulton, and Prof. Deissmann, there are only in the New Testament from 20 to 50 words which might be called Hebraised. New Testament Greek was entirely the *universal language of the Empire* in our Saviour's time, and was *not* peculiar to the Jews only.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Biblical Greek" p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> In a later edit. 1913, after the papyri discoveries, he altered his view.

<sup>3</sup> Deissmann "Light from the Ancient East," p. 72.



## DATE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS.

To an historical document the date is of great value. The longer the interval between the events and their written record, so much the less authority will be attached to the said document. The Tübingen School in Germany, placed the date of the New Testament writings at A.D. 170, or one hundred and forty years after the death and resurrection of our Saviour. Such a late date tends to detract from the value of the New Testament, and also labels the writers imposters, as some of them had declared that they were *eye witnesses*, which such a date would make impossible. As a matter of fact, even if the documents were written one hundred years after the happenings they recorded, their being written by Jews so well acquainted with and trained in, Oral Teaching, who could memorize sayings and records of facts in a remarkable way, and reproduce them long after without losing anything from their original accuracy, would enable them to describe events exactly as they took place. But the New Testament was written much earlier than one would have expected from Jewish writers of those times, because the message of the Gospel, unlike the teaching of the Rabbis, was intended for the whole world, and as it could not be transmitted orally everywhere by living agents, there arose the need of written documents to reach those living at a distance. Further, at the very beginning of the Christian Church, it was confronted with

various heresies, and it was necessary to write and combat these errors, as in the cases of the Church in Antioch, and in Galatia; and some of these infant churches needed guiding and strengthening, as at Corinth, which called forth St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians.

We shall in the following pages see how the knowledge of the Apostolic times, restored to us by Archæology, bears out the fact that the New Testament was written by the Apostles and Evangelists in the 1st Century, soon after the resurrection of our Lord.

#### THE WITNESS OF ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.

For various reasons to-day we have not the original manuscripts written by the Apostles. No doubt they were written on papyri, as it was a cheaper material than parchment: but being of a brittle nature, it would not last very long anywhere, excepting in Egypt. Also as sacred documents grew old, it was the Jewish custom to bury them, out of reverence for them. And added to the above facts, the determined onslaught made on Christian literature, and especially on the Bible, during the Roman persecutions in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, probably has altogether deprived us of the autograph writings of the Apostles and Evangelists. But we have manuscript parchments dating from the 4th Century. One of these is the Codex Sinaiticus, discovered in the year 1859 by Dr. Tischendorf, in the Convent of St.

Catherine's on Mount Sinai.<sup>1</sup> This venerable manuscript was probably originally in the library at Cæsarea, and carried thence to the Convent in A.D. 630, when the library was destroyed by Arabs. The Cæsarean library was a famous Christian one and was used by St. Jerome. He says that in his own time the papyri were wearing out, and were recopied on parchment. So we have a document coming to us from A.D. 340-367, with a worn out papyrus background ! At the present day many fragments of papyri from these writings are being found in Egypt, the only climate conducive to their preservation. In 1897 a leaf from a papyrus New Testament of the 3rd Century was discovered, and eight more in 1909, dating from the 4th Century. One of these fragments gives us Matt. i., 1-9, another one, John i., 23-31. In 1903, a leaf from an old Gospel was found at Oxyrhynchus, by Grenfell and Hunt, which goes back to the 3rd century.

Prior to the translation of the Authorised Version in 1611, we had not twenty-five Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, to-day we have over four thousand, many being of the 3rd Century date. This is very marvellous and without parallel in any other literature, either Roman, Greek or Jewish. As Dr. Wessely aptly says, "almost bordering on the miraculous." Besides these manuscripts of our New Testament, many manuscripts have been found which contain other sayings of Christ ; these are regarded

<sup>1</sup> Codex Sinaiticus by Helen & Kersopp Lake, p. 15.

by Prof. Sanday, Dr. Swete, and others as early independent documents, and Prof. Flinders Petrie, a great Egyptologist, suggests that like the memoranda of Socrates, which was made by his disciples during his life, they were made by Christ's disciples in his life time. Prof. Ramsay also considers these documents to have been written before the death of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

### THE WITNESS OF EARLY VERSIONS.

We have also the witness of the New Testament in other languages. This fact presupposes an original document behind, from which the translations were made. On February 8th, 1893, Prof. J. R. Harris and Dr. Burkett found the Syriac version as it was used at Edesse, in Syria ; it probably had been translated at Antioch some fifty years after the death of St. John, about A.D. 150. It might be of interest to quote a few passages from this version, to show how it was understood and produced in the Syrian tongue. " He who doth sin is the slave of sin." " Blessed is he who thirsts and hungers for justice." " My yoke is gentle, my burden is small." " They murmured against him in their teeth." Another interesting version is the Coptic, the language of Ancient Egypt : it was found in the ruins of the white monastery 150 miles South of Cairo. This language was a descendant of the hieroglyphic of the Pharaohs of the time of Moses.

<sup>1</sup> Exposition, Sers. vii. Vol. 3, p. 140.







St. Antony, the father of monastic orders, was born in Egypt, A.D. 251, in the desert bordering on the Red Sea, and he records reading the lesson from this Coptic version in his small village church on a Sunday in A.D. 265.

A.D. 150, is now accepted by many scholars as the date of the Coptic Version, and the original version must therefore have been of a much earlier date. A few lines from this rendering may be interesting. Acts xviii., 5, "Paul was persevering in the word." Acts xx., 28, "The Church of the Lord, which He won through His own blood." Rev. ix., 20, "demons of gold and silver."

#### THE WITNESS OF THE OLDEST CHURCH MANUAL.

In the year 1883, Philotheus Bryennos, the Metropolitan of Nicomedia, discovered an ancient document in the library of the Jerusalem Monastery, in the Greek quarter of Constantinople, which is written in New Testament Greek. This document is now spoken of as "The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles," or the "Didache." Besides referring to Sunday worship, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, etc., it has twenty-five direct quotations from the Gospels, seventeen of which are from that of St. Matthew. Scholars are divided as to its precise date, but the majority place it between A.D. 80 and A.D. 100. Prof. Harnack and Dr. Bartlett assign it to A.D. 120. Here we have a wonderful document forming a living link between Apostolic times

and the 2nd century, in the matters of worship, ministry, and doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

### THE WITNESS OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN APOLOGY.

In 1889, J. Rendel Harris found in the Convent of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai, a Syriac translation of a book written by Aristides. Aristides was a Greek philosopher of Athens, and was converted to Christianity. He became a great Christian Teacher, but still wore his philosophic gown—like Justin Martyr—in order to attract the attention of both Greeks and Romans: he is mentioned by Eusebius, Church Historian, as one who lived near the 1st Century, and who had known someone who had personally seen the Saviour.<sup>2</sup> Aristides wrote a book in defence of Christianity and sent it to the Emperor at Rome. Dr. Armitage Robinson thinks the Emperor was Hadrian, and this view is further confirmed by a later discovery of an *Armenian version*, which gives us the date, A.D. 117—A.D. 138. But Profs. Rendel Harris and Harnack believe the Apology was presented to the Emperor Antonius Pius, who reigned from A.D. 138 to A.D. 161. Evidently, therefore, the apology of Aristides was written in the early part of the 2nd century. The following short extract from the apology shows its reference not only to the tenets of Christianity, but also

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Sanday Expos. Serc. iii. Vol. 5, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius Hist. Eccle. iv., 3.

to the New Testament writings. "Now the Christians reckon their race from the Lord Jesus Christ, and He is confessed to be the Son of God most high. Having by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, and having been born of a Hebrew virgin, and having completed His wonderful dispensation, He was pierced by the Jews, and after three days revived and went up to heaven . . . and the Glory of His coming again, thou canst learn O king, from that which is called among them the Evangelistic Scripture." It also gives an account of the holy life of the early Christians. "These are they who beyond all the nations of the earth, have found the Truth, for they know God as the Creator and Maker of all things, and have His commandments graven on their hearts. They do not commit adultery or fornication, they do not bear false witness, they do not deny deposit, nor covet what is not their own. They do good to their enemies, their wives, O king, are pure, and their daughters are modest ; they walk in all humility and kindness, falsehood is not found amongst them. They are ready for Christ's sake to give up their own lives. If any righteous person of their number passes away from the world, they rejoice and give thanks to God, and they follow his body as though he were moving from one place to another ; but their sayings and ordinances O king, thou art able to know from their writings." Here we have the fact that at least a part of the New Testament was

known in the early part of the 2nd century, and that the Emperor could have access to it, if he wished.

### THE WITNESS OF JEWISH WRITERS OF THE 1st CENTURY.

It is extremely interesting to note that the Gospels are referred to in Mishna Judiani, ch. vi., v. 8, by Johannan ben Zakki, between the years 66 and 70, A.D. Johannan's successor at the head of the College and Council at Jamnia, was Rabbi Gamaliel 2, and his sister Imma Shalom, figures in the story of the Christian judge who quotes the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> The above evidence is of extreme importance, both on account of its source, and its early date.

### THE WITNESS OF THE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF THE TIME.

This witness points to the 1st Century as the ideal time for the growth and spread of Christianity and its sacred writings. The period from the year B.C. 27, the year of the accession of Augustus, to that of 78 A.D., when Flavious became Emperor, was a most remarkable one in the world's annals. The period before B.C. 27 was one of unparalleled evil, when civil wars were waged, and heartless cruelties practiced. The people of Rome itself were divided between the slaves and the citizens, the former were regarded as good only for sport in the Gladiatorial game, and were

<sup>1</sup> "The beginnings of Christianity," Vol 1, p. 319.

butchered to make a Roman holiday. When they rebelled against such infamous treatment, civil war was the result, and the whole of Italy was aflame. Six hundred slave gladiators alone were crucified between Rome and Capua. Things were not better in Palestine and other parts of the world. The Jews had scarcely recovered from the tyranny and persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, before they were smarting under the ambitious sons of the Maccabeans. John Hyrcanus II, the High Priest, and Aristobulus, the king—two brothers—coveting each other's office, plunged the nation into civil war for a long time. These children of the godly Maccabeans, were allying themselves now with heathen Rome, now with Parthia, now with the Nabatæans, and now with the Idumeans. Jerusalem, the Holy City, was captured with awful slaughter, first by the Pompey of Rome, and then by the Parthians. Hyrcanus, the High Priest, was dragged to Babylon and mutilated, so that he should be thereby disqualified for that office. Meanwhile Herod was ingratiating himself with Rome, so that he might capture Palestine, and thus gratify his own personal ambition.

Then in A.D. 27, the Pax Romani was ushered in, and a period of peace and plenty followed. The whole atmosphere of the New Testament breathes of such a time. The peace of the Roman world again became disturbed in A.D. 86, by the Dacian War, so that any progress of Christianity, and of Christian Literature, must have been

*before* that time. As Prof. Moulton aptly remarked, "Anno Domini prior to A.D. 70, is the ideal time for the writing of the Scriptures."<sup>1</sup> W.C. Allen goes so far as to place St. Matthew's Gospel at A.D. 50. So again Prof. Sayce's words are true when he says, "Whenever Archæology has been able to test the negative conclusion of Higher Critics, their theory has dissolved as a bubble in the air."<sup>2</sup>

### GENEALOGY.

We seem, under this title, to be faced with insuperable difficulties. In tracing the Genealogy of our Saviour, from either Adam or Abraham, we find some names in the direct line of descent have been omitted, not having been given as they had been in i. Chron., xxxi., 18. One Evangelist called Joseph the "son of Eli," the other speaks of him as the "son of Jacob." Also the names mentioned in the Gospels are *too few* to cover the length of time. During the 400 years period between Rahab and David, only a few names are mentioned. From the Captivity to Christ, 590 years, only 13 names are given. In dealing with these difficulties, there is no reason to suspect inaccuracy or fanciful arrangement, as Principal Grieve does; for the Evangelists really wrote exactly in the manner that their contemporaries wrote. Dr. Moses Gaster, the Chief Rabbi, giving instances of Samaritan and Phœnician documents,<sup>3</sup> shows that the

<sup>1</sup> "From Egyptian Rubbish Heaps," p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. Times. July, 1911.

<sup>3</sup> Ex. Times, Aug. 1917.



*immediate* line of succession was of *secondary* value, so long as descent could be traced in a *direct line*. These documents show us that each name is not necessarily to be taken as the son of the name preceding. The word "begat" did not imply immediate descent, it might refer to a son, grandson, or even further back, but in the *direct* line.

In the Old Testament we find Mephibosheth spoken of as the son of Saul, though he was really his grandson.<sup>1</sup> Obed is called the son of Naomi,<sup>2</sup> though he was only indirectly her grandson, and so Joseph can be described both as the son of Jacob, and of Eli, who were each his ancestors in a direct line. The Talmud calls the Messiah the son of Adam,<sup>3</sup> without mentioning *any* intervening ancestors, and in post Biblical Literature, we have genealogies of the same kind recorded, by such known scholars as Ben Azai and Ben Zakki.

The Évangelists were desirous of tracing the descent of Christ from both Abraham and Adam, but they omitted some of the names in the direct line of succession, it being a custom prevalent at the time they wrote. We find also in these genealogies, a symmetrical arrangement on the basis of the number seven, which probably expressed the idea of totality ; St. Matthew included three fourteens from Abraham to Christ ; and in tracing to Adam, including the name of God ; St. Luke mentions 77 names.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. xix., 24.      <sup>2</sup> Ruth iv., 17.      <sup>3</sup> Sanhed xcv., iii., a.

## MIRACLES.

There is an impassable gulf between the miracles of the New Testament and those of other records. The words and actions of great religious leaders, are often invested with the supernatural, after the lapse of years or centuries. It is a noteworthy fact that the great leaders of the Ethnic religions, such as Zoroaster, Confucius, Leo-tse, Buddha, and later Muhammed, never claimed the power to work miracles !

Confucius avoided<sup>1</sup> anything tending to the miraculous, "Practice the marvellous? That is what I do not." Buddha rebuked a man who talked of a man working miracles, saying "Man is not samana, there is no path through the air." Yet some centuries later, numbers of miracles were ascribed to Buddha ; he caused the flood to recede—flew through the air—passed through the stone wall—and soared up to heaven ! The miracles of the New Testament come under an entirely different category. The Miracles Christ worked were always for the benefit of others—works of grace and mercy. They were wrought in public, often amongst a crowd. They were recorded by eye-witnesses in the country where they were wrought.

Most scholars accept St. Mark's as the earliest, and St. John's the latest, gospel. According to the rationalistic theory, miracles increase in number as time advances.

<sup>1</sup> Alex. "Confucius the Great Leader," p. 290.

Therefore we ought to find none or very few in St. Mark's, and many in St. John's, Gospel. But, as a matter of fact, we have more in the former gospel than in the latter ! It is also remarkable that the unbelieving Jews, contemporaries of Christ, in spite of their hatred and malice, never denied that He worked miracles. The only argument they could advance was, that He wrought them either by Satanic agency, or by the sacred name of God. Even to-day an eminent Jewish scholar, Dr. Kohler, speaks of Jesus Christ, Who won fame and influence as a great 'wonder-worker.' It would seem an unaccountable omission if no miraculous works were ascribed to the Saviour, for one would expect the supernatural from a Divine Being. Even in nature there are different spheres or grades of life—each with its own appropriate function, as is well elaborated in a recent book by Dr. Chandler, 'Scala Mundi.' The function of a higher grade would naturally appear marvellous in a lower grade, although only a normal incident to the grade itself. To take a concrete example—the cabbage, horse, man, and angel, each has its own life and function. Now it would seem very strange to see a cabbage perambulating, but it is a normal function of a horse ! It would be equally strange to find a horse, however intelligent, talking like a man, or with inventive genius, spanning the continent in an aeroplane ; but this is merely a normal function of man ! If we could rise to a still higher grade, we mortals should

probably find the spiritual functions of angels seemingly quite miraculous. Our thoughts rise from these various grades to Him Who was, and Who is, above mortality, and higher than the angels and archangels ! His miraculous works were the logical expression of His highest Being. The miracles are described in the Gospel in three Greek words 'works,' 'signs,' and 'wonders.' While the works and signs were the necessary expression of His divine Being, to men they appeared as 'wonders.' The miracles wrought by the Apostles were the work of the Spirit of Christ Who dwelt in them.

Not only are there various grades of life with their appropriate functions, but there must be innumerable laws still undiscovered by mortal man. To-day no man of science will be bold enough to say he knows *all* the laws of nature. With regard to the discovery of new laws, we are like travellers in a mountainous district, as soon as we have ascended one peak, others appear beyond. Science has discovered many of these, but yet only a fraction of the whole. The Duke of Argyll, speaking with reference to miracles said "God uses laws unknown to man." A few years ago X-ray photography, wireless telegraphy, and the telephone would have been thought impossibilities, but the discovery of previously unknown laws has to-day made them possible. Again, once the power of mind upon mind, and soul upon soul, would have been thought fantastic, but to-day the discovery of a deeper law by

the science of Psychology, has made this fact a reality. Many scientific men of the day are becoming more and more conscious of the operation of a spiritual law in the world, above mental and physical laws. Prof. Hyslop suggests not only the use of a mental cure in the hospitals, but advocates setting up places for the treatment of lunatics, by casting out demons for them.<sup>1</sup> Sir Oliver Lodge, speaking of such spiritual laws, says of Hæckel, one of the pioneers of materialism in Germany, "Progressive thought left him, as well as his English example, Herbert Spencer, somewhat high and dry, stranded by the tide of opinion which now began to flow in another direction!"<sup>2</sup> Carlyle rightly observed that "The raising of the dead would *violate* no law, but prove the entrance of some deeper law."<sup>3</sup> So our divine Saviour violated no natural law in working His miracles, but used some higher law unknown to us.

It is a patent fact to-day that even man can intervene in, and direct, the laws of nature without breaking them. Some parts of the world have been devastated by malaria and other ills. Man, with his superior intellect, has intervened, and either destroyed the plague altogether, or modified it to an appreciable extent. There is the law of gravitation, which forbids iron to swim, but man so controls this law, that large ironclads float on the ocean and monster

<sup>1</sup> Robertson "Luke the Physician," p. 136, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Astley Prehist. Archlgy. pp. 48, 49.

<sup>3</sup> Sartor Resartus, Bk. 4., ch. 8.

airships traverse the atmosphere. Let our minds then soar up from the ingenuity of mortal man to the all-knowing Creator of all. If man with his limited ingenuity can control, or at least modify, some laws of nature, how much more can God Almighty control and direct *every law* for His own purpose? To-day even the exponents of materialistic science, cannot but observe a will and mind behind and above the laws of nature. Prof. Hæckel cannot find a suitable name for this mind, but calls it 'God,' and says "The will of God is at work, in every falling drop of rain, in every glow of crystal, in the centre of the rose, and in the spirit of man."<sup>1</sup> In view of the above we may ask with St. Paul "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"<sup>2</sup>

### ST. LUKE THE HISTORIAN.

For a long time the accuracy and veracity of St. Luke as an Historian was doubted by scholars of the extreme critical school. Baur, a German critic, said "The statements in the Acts can only be looked upon as intentional deviation from historical truth, in the interests of a special tendency."<sup>3</sup> Weizacker, as lately as 1902 said, "The historial value of the narrative in the Acts shrinks, until it reaches a vanishing point."<sup>4</sup>

Even amongst moderate scholars the current opinion

<sup>1</sup> Robertson "Prehist. Arch." p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xxvi., 8.

<sup>3</sup> 'Paul,' Vol 1., p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> 'Apostolic Age' p. 106.



was, that the Acts of the Apostles was written by an author in the middle of the 2nd Century, who wishing to influence the people of his time, drew a highly imaginative picture of the Apostolic days, caring little or nothing for the history and geography of the 1st Century—but working solely for his contemporaries, and not for the truth. Prof. Ramsay rightly observes “The Acts was regarded as the weakest part of the New Testament. No one who had any regard for his reputation as a scholar, cared to say a word in its defence.” . . . “The most conservative scholars as a rule thought the wisest plan was to say as little as possible about it.”<sup>1</sup>

But now if there be any person or book whose position is vindicated and ennobled in the critical world, it is St. Luke. One of the great achievements of research has been the happy discovery of St. Luke, nor only as an Evangelist, but as a man of high culture, an accomplished scholar, a poet, a scientific man, and a distinguished physician. Before we examine the accuracy of St. Luke's work, let us glance at the man himself, and his qualifications.

### ST. LUKE THE GREEK.

He bears a Greek name “Loukas” which is contracted from Loukios, as in English ‘Tom’ is contracted from ‘Thomas.’ The name Loukas was found among many Greek names on the walls of the Temple of Men-Askaenos

<sup>1</sup> Recent discoveries on the Trustworthiness of the N.T.

at the Pisidian Antioch. His mastery of idiomatic Greek, and his style of the Greek classical writers, betray his Greek descent. He classifies the people as a Greek would, dividing them into Greeks and barbarians. He also evidences a knowledge of the sea. The joy and delight the sea gives to people of to-day, is a sentiment which was unknown to the people of the Ancient world. St. John the Jew rejoices because in heaven there will be *no more* sea !

But amongst Greeks there was a love for the sea. Æschylus, the Greek poet, speaks of "Many wrinkling smiles of the ocean." St. Luke, in Acts xxvii., shows an intimate knowledge of minute nautical matters, which is confirmed by our modern naval experts. It is said that Nelson had been reading Acts xxvii. on the morning of the Battle of Copenhagen.

### ST. LUKE THE PHYSICIAN.

He was neither a quack nor a charlatan. The technical use of the medical terms he employs, could not have been known to a layman. It is of course quite admissible, that many educated men and women may know some technical medical terms ; but not to the extent that St. Luke did. He makes use of the same terms as those famous physicians Hippocrates, Galen, Aretæus Dioscordes. These men, even in our modern times, are regarded as ornaments of the medical profession. Dr. Robertson,

quoting the words of the late Sir William Osler in his Presidential address before the Classic Association in May, 1919, said "Hippocrates is a living power to-day," and he lamented that so many of our scientific men are ignorant of these great physicians.

*St. Luke also, as a physician, had a certain position in society.* Physicians as a class were highly respected. Julius Cæsar honoured all physicians at Rome by making them citizens. A list of the Imperial household of the Empress Livia, wife of Augustus, discovered in Rome, contains many names with the word 'medicus.'

#### ST. LUKE THE SCHOLAR.

St. Luke's writings show the versatility and ready pen of a scholar. He uses in the Acts and the Gospel, seven hundred and fifty choice words which do not appear in other portions of the New Testament. His literary style is that of Plutarch. His introduction to the Acts ranks with the style of Herodotus. His brevity and dignity equal that of Thucydides. St. Luke the Scholar excites the admiration even of Prof. Harnack, the moderate critic, who says "This man possessed higher culture in rich manner . . . he possessed more than ordinary talent."<sup>1</sup> Even Renan, from the hostile camp, rushes to pay his tribute, saying "The Gospel of St. Luke is the most literary one."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke the Physician, pp. 13—147.

<sup>2</sup> Robertson "Luke the Historian" p. 43.

St. Luke is of great value as a witness to the facts of Christianity, he was a Gentile with no Jewish predilections and a man of culture and social position. This is fully borne out by an examination of his work.

### THE ACCURACY AND VERACITY OF ST. LUKE'S WRITINGS.

Now St. Luke is the only Evangelist who links his narratives with the historical events of the 1st Century, and so he lays himself open to easy detection of errors. Let scientific scholars test his works, by the evidence that Archæology affords, of the doings of the 1st Century. His description of the Missionary efforts of the Apostolic Church, is a true picture of the time prior to A.D.70. The Missionaries were not persecuted by the Roman magistrates, but rather protected, the only persecution incurred in Hellenistic cities, was that of the mob, at the instigation of the Jews. But in the 2nd Century this was entirely changed, and Rome herself became the persecutor. Again, St. Luke gives us precise information as to the titles borne by government officials, in the different cities of the Roman world. He tells us that the Governor of Cyprus was Sergius Paulus, and that he bore the official title of Pro-consul, representing the Senate, and not the Emperor. Discoveries confirm this, and mention that he ~~was~~ pro-consul, although that title a few years before his time, had not been borne by the Governor of Cyprus. At Ephesus he notices an

official bearing the title of Asiarch,—discoveries now find that this was a title peculiar to Ephesus ! He gives the title of Politarche to an official in Thessalonica, this title had never been met with in any literature all these centuries, and some declared St. Luke to be romancing, but now discoveries on the very spot have proved him to be correct ! In St. Luke iii., 1—3, many officials are mentioned, amongst whom is Lysanias, Tetrarch of Abilene. Now, scholars only knew of one Lysanias, and he was neither a Tetrarch, nor of Abilene, but was king of Chalcis, according to Josephus ;<sup>1</sup> he lived sixty years before the time that St. Luke mentions, and was murdered by Marcus Antony at Cleopatra's instigation. B.C.36. Here Scholars discovered a glaring blunder ! Prof. Schurer tried to justify St. Luke, by appealing to a doubtful inscription discovered some time ago, but it was not very satisfactory. Now an inscription has been discovered at Abila (Suk Wady 'Barada), the capital of Abilene, a picturesque spot north of Damascus ; it deals with the dedication of a Temple on behalf of the salvation of the Emperor and his household by Nymphaios, a freed man of Lysanias the Tetrarch ! Another inscription of the time of Tiberius, speaks of Lysanias the Tetrarch. This inscription is carved on the face of a rock, and can be read by any passer-by today. After all Dr. Luke was right ; and it was the modern doctors who were drawing on their imaginations !

<sup>1</sup> Josephus Antiq. iv., 1.

We will just notice one more of the historical data of St. Luke ! In ch. ii., 1, 2, of his Gospel he says, " There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed (enrolled), and this enrolment was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria." Critical scholars really thought that this time St. Luke *was* in error, and that his only object was to try and prove the prophecy, that the Saviour should be born in Bethlehem. ' Whoever heard of a general enrolment in the Roman Empire ! ' they said. Even Garthausen, the latest historian of Augustus, knew nothing about it, and Wilcken, another great historian, speaks of the passage as the ' legend of Luke ' (das Lucas leginde), and when we turn to the Encyclopædia Biblica, that veritable storehouse of destructive criticism, we find Prof. P. W. Schmiedel calling it " A mere groundless fiction." <sup>1</sup> Even moderate critics have been puzzled and troubled by it. Dr. A. B. Bruce informs the faithful that Bishop Westcott and Dr. Hort have bracketed the verse in question, and that he sincerely wished it were omitted, or, that there were reason to believe, as several writers suggested, that it was a gloss which had found its way into the text, and that St. Luke was not responsible for it. <sup>2</sup> On the face of it, it must be admitted, that there were numerous difficulties about the passage, such as ' If there were a general enrolment

<sup>1</sup> Enc. Bib., Vol. 11, 750.

<sup>2</sup> Exp. Gk. Test on St. Luke, p. 471.



in the Roman world, what need was there for Joseph to go to Bethlehem for it, and for Mary to go too?' 'Was Cyrenius governor at this particular time?' The answer to these questions has now come to us, who were still hoping for a satisfactory explanation, and it has come through the Papyri. They tell us that there were general enrolments, held periodically: some papyri give the dates 20, 34, 48, 62, 76, which points to an enrolment every 14 years. This custom had evidently been in force for a long time, because at the enrolment under Claudius in 48 A.D., a man gave his age as 150, and this aroused the suspicion of the officials, and they had to search the enrolment records, which went back 250 years! Would these documents apply to a semi-independent country such as Judæa? Rome possessed a unique genius for colonisation; though at heart she aimed at a monarchic empire, she found it politic to allow the existence of many autonomous states under her sway, each having its own territory, laws, magistrates, and currency. By such an arrangement she was immune from having to provide a large army of occupation, and from much officialdom, and also it kept the populations in good humour, under their own native kings, or chieftains. So instead of spending money, she enriched her Treasury with the reasonable tribute she imposed.

In a general enrolment all were included. In the enrolment made in Cyrenius' time we find that Apameia was

included in the enrolment, although it was an independent kingdom situated between Galatia and Cilicia. Now Judæa was more Roman than Apameia was, because Herod the king was a mere creature of Augustus, and was treated, Josephus says, as a subject.<sup>1</sup> When Herod died, his successor Archelaus had to be appointed by Augustus; Judæa therefore would certainly not have been left out of the enrolment of the Roman Empire. If the enrolment then was held in Palestine, why could not Joseph have been enrolled in Nazareth, where he was living, instead of being compelled to go to Bethlehem? Three different official papyri (now in the British Museum) have been discovered dated A.D. 104. In one of them we read Prefect Vibius Maximus says "All who for any reason whatever are away from their own tribal home (nomos), should return to their home to enrol themselves." Joseph was of the house of David the Bethlehemite, and had to go to his tribal home Bethlehem. This also involved Mary's accompanying him, judging from the following enrolment papyri A.D. 154, when the Prefect says "If any person is found staying on an alien land, he shall be arrested and brought before me as no longer merely a subject, but actually as a confessed malefactor." These enrolments were household ones, therefore *all* had to return to their tribal home.

Was Cyrenius governor at this particular time mentioned

<sup>1</sup> Josephus Antiq. xvi., 9; xvii., 32.

by St. Luke ? There was an enrolment in Judæa in A.D. 6, when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria, but was there one between B.C. 8, and 6, the time of the birth of Christ ? A few years ago a stone, with inscriptions, was found at Antioch in Syria, and another one at Hissar Ardi, near Antioch, which showed clearly that Cyrenius was there at the time, having been sent there in an emergency, and having discharged his functions so well, he had been sent there again, so that he was twice Governor of Syria ! Thus the stones are crying out, that what St. Luke wrote was sober and accurate history. Prof. Harnack has reversed the verdict of his countrymen, the German Higher Critics, and has ranked St. Luke as an historian superior to Josephus, and has assigned his writings prior to A.D. 70. Prof. Harnack thus reverses his position as a critic of St. Luke, and takes up the cudgels in his defence. He ridicules the intolerable pedantry of other critics who " Cannot see the facts for their theories." <sup>1</sup>

### THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

Many Higher critics consider this Gospel to be the work of a Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria, and that it was written at a much later date than the close of the 1st Century. If this assertion were true it would detract a great deal from the value of the book, and would falsify the evidence of the qualified, trustworthy, and contemporary witnesses.

<sup>1</sup> Robertson " Luke the Historian," p. 3.

Let us first of all examine the external evidences as to the authorship of St. John. The Church of Christ for 1,800 years, without any hesitation has accepted the fourth Gospel as the work of St. John, an eye witness ; and has based its acceptance on the internal evidence of the book, and upon the witness of the contemporaries of the author. Let us hear the testimony of a few of these contemporary witnesses : Irenæus, according to an Armenian historian of the 7th century, A.D., was born at Laodicea in the earlier part of the 2nd century ; he was well acquainted with the Church life of Asia, and later became Bishop of Lyons. He was a contemporary of Polycarp ; when writing to Florinus, he says he was with Polycarp from his youth.<sup>1</sup> So from his early days he had known Polycarp (who had been made Bishop of Smyrna by St. John), and was his intimate friend.<sup>2</sup> He was told by Polycarp that St. John, who also reclined upon our Saviour's breast, dwelt at Ephesus, and had written his Gospel there, and was still living there in the year A.D. 98, at the accession of the Emperor Trajan. Further—whenever Irenæus quotes the fourth Gospel he also says, “ John the disciple of the Lord.”

A similar testimony is given by Bishop Pothinus, who was also connected in his earlier days with Asia, and was the predecessor of Irenæus, in the Bishopric of Lyons. He was born about A.D. 87.

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius H. E. V. xx., 5.

<sup>2</sup> Eus. iii., 36.

Besides Pothinus, we have two other noteworthy contemporaries of St. John, in Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, and Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, both of whom were born between A.D. 70 and A.D. 80, and were also his disciples. Papias in one place refers to the author of the fourth gospel as "the elder," ; because of this, some have inferred that the writer could not have been an apostle, but an "elder" only. But why should not an "elder" be an apostle? St. Peter calls himself an "elder," and he certainly was an apostle.<sup>1</sup> That the remark of Papias does not militate against the writer of the gospel being an apostle, is maintained by Bishop Lightfoot. One of the most important witnesses of St. John's authorship of the fourth Gospel, is Bishop Polycrates, who most probably was born towards the close of the 1st century, and as a youth may have known St. John. He eventually became the Bishop of Ephesus, where St. John had resided. Polycrates was in a position to know the history and traditions of the Church at Ephesus accurately, and its connection with St. John. When he was writing in his old age, A.D. 180, to Victor, Bishop of Rome, about the controversy regarding the exact date of Easter, he said, "We observe the exact day, neither adding nor taking away, for in Asia great luminaries have fallen asleep, who shall rise on the day of the Lord's Advent. John, who reclined on the Lord's breast . . . he fell asleep at Ephesus," and he refers to his gospel, adding further

<sup>1</sup>1 Pet., v., 1.

that he had seven bishops, his kinsmen, who kept the same date (for Easter), and had knowledge of St. John.

So before the close of the 2nd Century and onward the fourth Gospel according to St. John, was widely known and quoted through all the extent of Christendom, in Churches varying in origin, language and history: in Lyons, Rome, Carthage, Alexandria, Athens, Corinth and many other cities. This is the witness the Churches gave to this sacred book of St. John's Gospel.

Individual witnesses were not wanting. Men of culture, richly endowed mentally, with full access to materials for judgment, and full powers to exercise that judgment, declared St. John to be the author of the fourth gospel. Down the centuries this fact had never been questioned until the present day. We will now glance at the

### INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

The contents of the gospel show conclusively that it could not have been written by an Alexandrian Jew. The writer has a minute knowledge of the life and customs of the Jews in Palestine. He mentions Nathaniel, "sitting under the fig tree," which was a Palestinian saying equal to "being at home." He alludes to the washing of feet before meals, the Rabbinic rule of not talking with women, the water pots for purifications. These things would not be familiar to a Jew of Alexandria. He also shows an intimate knowledge of the country of Palestine, he gives



minute details of places. An Alexandrian Jew would at the best have but scanty knowledge of its geography. The Geography of Ptolemy, and the History of Strabo were very meagre, and would not afford much information to a foreign Jew. The writer, besides being a Palestinian, must have been an eye witness, giving insight into the talks and deeds of Christ and of the disciples. The Gospel itself bears this out, when Christ answered St. Peter's question concerning St. John's death, the writer says, "This is the disciple which testified of these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true."

### JESUS THE "LOGOS."

Without doubt the Higher Critics are aware of the strong external and internal proof of St. John's authorship, but they are misled by the term "Word" in the first verse, because that word was a favourite technical term of Alexandrian philosophy, especially so of Philo, the Jew. The critics take this term "word" (*logos*), as the key to the whole gospel, and consider that its contents deal entirely with the Divinity of Christ as the *Logos*, a *super-mundane* divine person, and the writer, according to their view, ignores altogether the human side of His personality, and the fact that its author therefore must have been a Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria! But St. John, writing much later than the other evangelists, whose gospels were already known in the Church, was meeting certain exigencies

of his time. Heresies as to the person of our Saviour were already creeping in, and there was real need to emphasise the Divinity of Our Lord ; yet without overlooking His humanity ! He is spoken of in the Gospel as incarnate, as entering into the joys and sorrows of men, as being weary, thirsty, weeping, etc. His manhood was decidedly not overlooked by St. John.

The teaching of the fourth Gospel concerning the Divinity of our Lord is in perfect harmony with the rest of the New Testament, none of which was written by Hellenistic Jews. The Synoptic Gospels in giving an account of our Saviour's earthly ministry, did not lose sight of His Divinity. A noteworthy fact in the New Testament is the identification of Jesus of Nazareth with Jehovah of the Old Testament, the covenant God of Israel. God's name Jehovah was held to be so sacred that Rabbis, in the time of our Saviour, would not even pronounce it, but substituted other words such as " The Blessed," " The Highest," " The Holy One," and " Lord." But the disciples boldly identified the Saviour with the sacred name, designating Him throughout the New Testament "*Lord*." St. Jude, in his epistle, in speaking of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt by Jehovah, says "*Jesus* saved the people out of Egypt." This is the rendering of the two oldest MS.S, which are classified as A. and D.

St. Paul, in all his epistles, and especially in Colossians and Ephesians, deals with the Divinity of Christ quite as

much, if not more than St. John. Christ is depicted as "One in Whom the Godhead dwelleth in a bodily form." He is pre-existent as God, the sole agent in Creation. Further, we have the witness of the earliest Church hymns, which are held by scholars to have been the work of Hebrew Christians of Palestine, and which employ similar terms to St. John. This document was found and published in 1909, by Dr. Rendell Harris; it is a Syrian manuscript of 64 leaves, entitled 'Psalms of Solomon.' Prof. Harnack considers this discovery as supreme to anything ever found since that of the *Didache* (Teaching of the Twelve Apostles), and thinks it to be a hymn book of our Lord's time, and edited by the Christian community of Palestine about the year A.D. 100. One wonders whether these may not be the hymns and spiritual songs of St. Paul, mentioned in Eph. v., 19, and Col. iii., 16. A few extracts from some of these hymns may interest our readers—"His Word is with us in all our way," "The Saviour Who makes alive and does not reject our souls," "The light dawned from the Word that was before Time," "Christ is the true One and was known before the foundation of the world," "A new song from those who love Him, Alleluia."

Still the question remains whether St. John, a Palestinian Jew, could make use of the technical term, "the Word." The Palestine Targum—the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, had a word "Memra," which is an equivalent of the Greek word "Logos," and used no less

than one hundred and fifty times, as the "word of the Lord." For example, it renders Gen. xxii., 16, "By my word have I sworn," instead of "By myself have I sworn saith the Lord." In Gen. xxviii., 20, the words of Jacob are thus rendered, "If the word (*memra*) be with me," instead of "If God be with me." Sometimes it is used for "Shekinah," or the angel of the Lord. It must have been well known to St. John, who was familiar with this Old Testament, and he applied it to Christ. Again—if we take the Greek word, "*Logos*," we find that it was not the exclusive property of Alexandrian philosophy, but belonged to all Greek and Roman philosophy.

The birthplace of this technical word was not Alexandria, but *Ephesus*, where Heraclitus, an Ephesian, recoiling from the rationalistic and materialistic philosophy of the Greeks, left the city; he retired to the mountains, spending the rest of his life in religious contemplation as a recluse. Whilst meditating on the beauty of Nature all around him, he realised the presence of a design in it, and a mind controlling it. This he called "the word," and this technicality was generally adopted in Greek philosophy, which expounded "the word" as being "a divine will imminent in the Universe." Anaxagorus called it "the divine intelligence," and it was termed by Stoic philosophers "the thought of God expressed in action." Surely St. John, who lived in Ephesus for so many years, could employ the word "*logos*" quite as well as an Alexandrian

Jew! St. John, made use of current words, converting them to Christian use just as St. Paul did. What philosophy expressed as an intelligence or mind in the Universe, St. John said was Christ, the second Person in the Holy Trinity. The underlying idea of the term Logos in the Gospels, is diametrically opposed to the idea that would be in the mind of a Hellenistic Jew of the Alexandrian School. The idea of Logos becoming flesh by incarnation, and dying on the cross, would be foreign altogether to him, he would never be able to realise the self sacrificing love of God through the Son. St. John the beloved disciple could depict that Logos as "tabernacled in the flesh" and becoming the full revelation of the Father, and exhibiting by His death on the cross the self sacrificing love of God.

### CHRIST AND CRITICISM.

Criticism of the Old Testament compels the criticism of the New. As St. Augustine says, "The New Testament is enfolded in the Old, and the Old Testament is unfolded in the New." There is a vital connection between the two portions of the Scriptures, and one cannot deny the authority of the one without impugning that of the other. By the inevitable logic of their reasonings, the Critics have been compelled to question the Divine authority of Christ; because while the authorship of Moses was doubted, and the book of Deuteronomy looked upon as a work of imposture, Christ upheld not only the authorship of Moses, and

the inspiration of Deuteronomy, but also the whole of the Old Testament, to which He constantly referred as God's message. In an English Law Court, after a witness has made his deposition, the counsel advises the Judge or presiding magistrate, that the case must stand unless the witness be discredited. The case of the authority of the Old Testament must stand unless the witness, that is Christ, be discredited. If Christ be right, the Critics must be wrong, and *vice versa*. This is well understood by the Critics themselves. Prof. Kuenen, the Dutch Scholar, says, "We must either lay aside as valueless our dearly bought scientific method, or we must for ever cease to realise any New Testament authority within the domain of the Old Testament exegesis."<sup>1</sup> Again, the German professor, Mainhold, says, "If Christ is right in His utterances, the criticism of the Old Testament vanishes," and again, "That Jesus erred, undoubtedly is the case."<sup>2</sup>

Today the question faces us, not this time Baal or God, Christ or Zeus, but Christ and sceptical Higher Criticism, which arrogates to itself that infallibility which is the sole prerogative of Christ alone. One of the many arguments used in proving the fallibility of Christ is that "He taught like His contemporaries, and shared their mistakes, especially touching the Old Testament," thus He is reduced to the rank of a mere Rabbi of His time.

<sup>1</sup> Profeten Eu. : Profetic. p. 487.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. St. Clair Tisdall. "Facts to be faced," p. 7.



Discoveries, and the work of many able scholars, have put into our hands so much knowledge of the time of our Saviour, that we can test this assertion, and see whether our Saviour did teach as His contemporaries taught, and whether He shared their fallibility. His incarnation was the supreme example of His identification with humanity ; living in Palestine He spoke the language, and even used the very manner of the expression (i.e., parables and similes) of His contemporaries. He endorsed what was true in their teaching, but never shared their errors. He taught as the Son of God, the revealer of the Father, with an infallible authority unlike that of the Scribes and Pharisees, as we shall see in the following pages.

### SADDUCEES.

One contemporary class of our Saviour's time was that of the Sadducees. They were the aristocracy of the people, their consuming ambition was Politics : they were more engrossed in secular questions than in religious matters. They brushed aside all serious thoughts on religion : to them there was neither the resurrection of the body, nor future retribution—they believed neither in the Messianic hope nor in angelic beings. Every one can see here that the teaching of Christ was diametrically opposed to their teaching, and He warned His disciples against the leaven of the Sadducees, further adding that they neither knew the Scriptures nor the power of God. Matt. xxii 23.

## ESSENES.

Another class of people was the Essenes, an obscure sect of whom we have no mention in the Gospels, nor in the Jewish writings of the time. All our knowledge of them is drawn from Josephus, Philo, Alexandria, and the Roman writer, Pliny the Elder. The Essenes, according to them, were a monastic order living on the Western shore of the Dead Sea and elsewhere, and distinguished by long white garments. They were secluded from all society and did not mix in crowds ; their religion was revealed only to the initiated. The members had to take an oath that they would not divulge its teachings to others. They held their services in secret amongst themselves, worshipping towards the sun, and they never visited the Temple in Jerusalem, even at Great Festivals. They forbade marriage, and kept up the number of their ranks by adopting young boys, whom they trained. They were very strict in religious observances, such as the washing of hands, and fasting. Their food was of the simplest kind, and was not even allowed to be cooked with oil, and they partook of their frugal meal in silence. We can see there was nothing in common between our Saviour and these Essenes. Our Saviour's first recorded miracle was at the marriage in Cana of Galilee ; He mixed up with the crowd, frequented the Temple, and charged His disciples to make known His teaching to all nations.

## PHARISEES.

The dominant party was that of the Pharisees ; who, of course, with the Scribes and lawyers, had the monopoly of the religious teaching of the time. Let us see whether at any time our Saviour shared the errors of their doctrine.

## I. GOD.

The Babylonian Captivity left a strong mark on the Jew, for good or evil. The gross idolatry of Babylonia disgusted the Jew, and cured him once for all of his hitherto continual tendency to idolatry. On the other hand, it caused him the loss of the Old Testament conception of the 'nearness' of God. In the earlier history of the nation, God had taught them through the teaching of the Tabernacle that He dwelt in the midst of His people, as their King, Guide, Friend, and Father : but in Babylonia this idea became modified owing to the unapproachable pomp and majesty of the Babylonian and Persian kings. The Pharaohs of Egypt, and the Kings of Judæa and Israel could be approached as chieftains of their people, but Babylonian monarchs could be reached only through groups of officials, who acted as mediators. So the Jew of the Captivity removed God as it were to a more elevated spot in the Universe, and began to modify passages in the Old Testament relative to God's nearness.

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, B.C.300, we have Ex. xix., 3, rendered " Moses went to the *Mount*

of God " instead of " Moses went up unto *God*." In passages where we read of the eye, or the ear, of God, and of His talking with man, the Rabbis substituted the phrase " as it were " and almost ceased to call Him by His covenant name Jehovah. The Priests in the Benediction, uttered it only in a whisper. Such a view of God detracted from His love and Fatherhood. For although some of the Pharisees spoke of God's mercy, holiness, and love, they had unfortunately said other things which made grace and love more than doubtful. The Almighty had occasionally been represented as a Deity, autocratic and capricious in power, who laboured under the feeling of revenge. Did our Saviour share this view of the Pharisees? Emphatically No ! With Christ He is no God far away, no absentee God, but one with whom any believer could talk in his secret chamber. God is so present everywhere that even His care and providence are shown to a poor sparrow, or the flowers of the field. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son He is portrayed as a loving, pitying, and forgiving Father. He is a God Who goes forth to search for the sinful and outcast, and reckons no cost too great, if only they can be reached and won ! His love embraces not only one nation but all men ! Natural limits are abolished once for all.

## 2. MAN.

The Pharasaic mistaken view of God led to a wrong

view of man. Not only did Pharisaism deny the brotherhood of all nations, but it placed a gulf between Jew and Jew. It formed a society or brotherhood whose only qualification was the intense study of the law. Rabbi Akiba, a leading Rabbi of the time, in his discussion with Rabbi Tarphon in Lydda, said, "The story of the law is greater than the doing of it."<sup>1</sup> So that only those who studied the law were brothers, and all the rest, whether Priest or High Priest, were called Ame-ha-ares.

Rabbi Hillel said "No ame-ha-ares is pious."<sup>2</sup> So all who did not study the law were regarded as impious and not deserving even of mercy; Rabbi Eleazar said "If a man has no knowledge it is forbidden to have mercy on him." So the nation was divided into the Ame-ha-ares or the mass of the people, and the Chaberim. Those who had fallen from their ranks were neglected and shunned as unclean, and no one sought to bring them back or restore them. Our Saviour had no share in such exclusiveness; when the young ruler asked him "Who is my neighbour" (Chaberim) He pointed out the man who was *in need* of help.

It was indeed a problem to the young ruler. Was his neighbour the whole Jewish nation, separate from the Gentiles? or was he, the orthodox Pharasaic party exclusive of the Sadducees and Essenes, or was he the narrow class with the Pharasaic group, who numbered only 600

<sup>1</sup> Kiddushim xl., 6.

<sup>2</sup> Aboth ii., 6.

and called themselves 'neighbours' (chaberim)? So the Saviour, by the parable of the Good Samaritan inculcated the grand lesson, that the neighbour is *any man* who is in need of help.

He also called the masses to Himself, and preached that the Kingdom of God is open to publicans and sinners. He shows mercy and love even to His enemies "I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you."

#### WOMEN.

The Pharisee classed women with the slaves; they were exempt from reading the law. When he offered up his thanks he said "Blessed art thou our Lord God, King of the universe, Who hast not made me a woman"! which passage is still retained in the Prayer book of the modern Jew. But our Saviour raised womanhood to a higher dignity, by His friendship and tender care.

#### SABBATH.

The Pharisee drew up a catalogue of forty works save one which might not be performed on the sabbath day. Offenders were threatened with excommunication, and penalties still more dire. These 39 works were subdivided into many more. Some of the prohibitions in the subdivisions were most childish. Take one on ploughing for



instance. "On the Sabbath no one must draw a chair along, lest it make a rut on the ground, which would be accounted ploughing." There is another on burden-bearing. "No one must walk on stilts on the sabbath, nor may a tailor walk carrying his needle, nor a scribe with his pen, for that would be burden bearing." One on reaping declares 'a woman must not look in the looking glass, lest she see a grey hair and remove it, which would be reaping.' Our Saviour brushes aside these absurd rules, and claims freedom as Lord of the Sabbath, declaring that the Sabbath was instituted for the *benefit* of man, and not to *enslave* him.

### THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM.

The teaching of the Pharisees regarding the Messianic kingdom differed from that of the Old Testament prophecies. They taught that it was merely the temporal power of the Jewish race, the freedom of Palestine from the Roman yoke, and the final and utter destruction of that power. The Targums emphasised the militant features of the Prophecy, and pictured a triumphant warrior—Messiah. Rabbi Akiba toured the country, stirring up the people against the power of Rome, and later the nation welcomed Simon bar Koziba (bar cocheba) as the Messiah, though he had no religious or hereditary pretensions (not being a descendant of David). And again a 'suffering' Messiah found no echo in the Jewish heart. Christ's teaching on

this matter had nothing in common with that of the Pharisees. We have sufficiently illustrated that the teaching of Christ at no time shared the errors of the Pharisees. In this connection it will be interesting to quote the words of Montefiore, a modern Jew. "The Synoptic Gospels contain teaching which in comparison with average Judaism is both valuable and original, both new and true. Religion and morality joined together at a white heat. The excellence of the Synoptic teaching often glows with light and fire . . . the mass of the Rabbinic teachings are blurred by a mass of greatly inferior matter, they are not illuminated by a noble life. Suppose we make a selection of great sayings and teachings of the Talmud and Midrash, it must be admitted that the same powerful driving, the emotional effect, as that of the Gospel, is not produced."<sup>1</sup> Our Saviour declared Himself one with God "I and the Father are one." He declared that He taught as the Son of God, and that His teaching was from God. "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the Father that dwelleth in Me."<sup>2</sup> So the words of Christ were the words of God.

Further, after Christ's resurrection, when He had divested Himself of the mortal body, and put on the spiritual one, radiant with His Father's glory, He still endorsed His belief in the Divine authority of the Old Testament, referring to its three main divisions, as known amongst His

<sup>1</sup> Hibbert Journal July, 1905, p. 5., 52.

<sup>2</sup> Jno. xiv., 10.

contemporaries, and their fulfilment, in His death and resurrection "Beginning at *Moses* and all the *prophets* He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning *Himself*."<sup>1</sup> He also bestowed upon the Church the gift of the Holy Spirit, to "guide them into all truth." The Divine Spirit at His advent on the day of Pentecost endorsed the teaching of Christ and must have guided St. Peter when he referred to the Old Testament as a Divine revelation. So the Apostolic Church knew no fallible Christ; in the study of the New Testament in the soft light and shadows of two thousand years ago, the Saviour in Whom our souls rejoice, arises before us in resplendent form, the form of a Divine liberator, a mighty opponent of Pharisaism and all false teaching, the Friend and Saviour of sinners, of the lost, and of the outcast.

Modern discoveries are a great asset to the Church of Christ, helping it to visualize His earthly sojourn, lighting up His divine sayings, enabling it to see Him rising above all other teachers of mankind, "the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely." The only perfect and infallible Man, with a harmonious life, sublime faith, incomparable optimism, unquenchable love, tender sympathy, effulgent with majesty and power, and Who constrains even the doubting ones to cry "My Lord and my God."

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv., 27.

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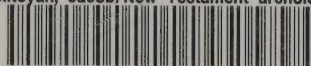


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